

José Milla y Vidaurre:  
Historian of Central America (1822-1882)

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Fig. 1.—José Milla (Salomé Jil), 1822-1882

## PREFACE

Central America is recognised as one of the areas of the Latin world of the Americas which has been least studied in the United States. Yet, periodically, the affairs of one or more of the five republics that make up the political family of the Isthmian region find their way into the headlines of the American press. The treatment given Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica by editors, correspondents, and radio and television commentators bears painful testimony to the fact of our ignorance of that area. With little written about the Isthmus in English, where does one begin in order to focus attention on the Central American scene? The human side of its history, as seen in the lives and works of men who have contributed to the development of Central American political, social, and economic institutions, and the arts, seems a valid point of departure.

José Milla of Guatemala is a worthy example of the Isthmian man of talent, productivity, and human dignity, and, his irrepressible sense of humor afforded him that necessary ingredient to live an abundant life. He grew up with the modern period of Central American history, being born in 1822 in the year following its political emancipation from Spain after three hundred years of colonial life. Describing the colonial past, as well as current Guatemalan life about him, his contribution to a national literature afforded his countrymen a rich heritage of novels, short tales, newspaper editorials and articles, biographical writings, poetry, and history. His story was that of the formation of a nineteenth-century

literary historian, but, lest that title frighten away a potential reader, Milla's wonderful sense of humor made many of the incidents of his life universally appealing.

In 1948, my best friend, Dr. Thomas B. Irving, now of the University of Minnesota--then Director of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala Summer School in Guatemala City, and Dr. Arturo Torres-Rioseco, of the University of California (Berkeley), arranged a one-year appointment for me to the staff of the Summer School in the delightful capital city of Guatemala. Three pleasant years later, in 1951, as I prepared to return to New Orleans to pursue further graduate study at the Tulane University of Louisiana, I was searching for material on the Nicaraguan filibuster-president, William Walker of Tennessee. Prof. J. Joaquín Pardo, Director of the General Archive of Guatemala, sent me to Director J. Daniel Contreras R. at the National Museum of History and Fine Arts to see some documents containing Walker materials.

Lic. Contreras showed me the material, which came from a series of sixty-odd letters written in the 1850's and 1860's by José Milla y Vidaurre of whose fame I already knew. Mr. Contreras' transcriptions of the letters made such fascinating reading that I abandoned General Walker and asked my secretary in the Summer School, Miss Emilia Rosales G., to copy the letters for me to take to New Orleans. At Tulane University, I studied in 1951-52 with the aid of a Department of Latin American Studies Scholarship, made available to me through Dr. William J. Griffith, head of that program. Dr. Daniel Wogan permitted me seminar time in the Department of Spanish to prepare an introduction to the Milla letters. That task led to the discovery, with no little surprise, that no one had yet adequately studied



the "famous" writer José Milla.

In 1952, when I moved to the University of Florida to become assistant to Dr. A. Curtis Wilgus of the School of Inter-American Studies, I continued to do research on Milla. Dr. Irving read the seminar paper and thought it ought to be a dissertation topic, and, in fact, it grew to be one. During a trip to Washington, D. C., in June, 1954, Dr. Arthur E. Gropp, Librarian of the Pan American Union, and Dr. Howard E. Cline, Director of the Library of Congress' Hispanic Foundation, both gave me valuable suggestions with regard to materials and procedures for my study. In 1953 and 1954, during the annual Caribbean Conferences of the University of Florida, I was able to seek advice from Mrs. Lilly de Jongh Osborne and Dr. Adrián Recinos, both of whom are established authors and key members of the Guatemalan Society of Geography and History. Rector Jorge Fidel Durón of the University of Honduras, whose father wrote a biography of Milla's father, gave me useful hints for methodology in the 1954 conference.

My father-in-law, Dr. Charles A. Ainslie, Director of the American Hospital in Guatemala City for the past thirty-odd years, kindly and generously helped make a trip to Guatemala possible at Christmas, 1954. At that time, the final research was completed with the help of Prof. Pardo, Lic. Benjamín Godoy Castro, Director of the National Library--and his very able assistants there, Miss María Albertina Gálvez G. and Mr. Francisco A. de León. Mr. José Luis Reyes M., Secretary of the Society of Geography and History made the facilities of that library available to me again, and he has patiently supplied me with books through the mails too. The newspaper collections and rare books in those three archives and

libraries made my research exciting, as the exact chronology of the events of Milla's life began to take form out of the fiction that had previously hampered a study of the man.

The evolution of his adult thinking and the nature and scope of his political career and journalistic offerings, became clearer through the new raw materials turned up in the newspapers—which in Milla's day served as news source, book, journal, and magazine, all in one. Milla's position close to General Rafael Carrera, who was the caudillo-president of Guatemala from 1839 until 1865, began to provide interesting data for an understanding of that hitherto unknown period called the Thirty-Year Regime. No history has yet been written of those long years in Guatemala's national period. As official spokesman for the Conservative government, the "bard" Milla, was a key political figure in his epoch, and that regime afforded him a vehicle to express his writings in newspaper form.

Borrowing a title from Milla, The Tailor's Basket (El Canasto del Sastre), to combine it with one of my mother's usual good-sense observations, the bio-bibliographical study of Milla was at times an irritating process of ripping out the falsely-placed stitches of mythology that have been fabricated and of reweaving the threads of the story into a better-fitting garb. However, when working entirely from the raw materials, it was a tailor's delight.

Drs. John Goggin, Harry Kantor, Lyle McAlister, Irving Wershow, A. Curtis Wilgus, and, Chairman Donald E. Worcester, the members of my committee, have helped me in innumerable ways throughout the process of presenting this dissertation in the Inter-American Area Study Program: Drs. McAlister, Wershow, and Worcester in seminar papers on Milla; Drs. Goggin and Kantor

in their courses; Dr. Wilgus as a patient sounding-board; and Dr. Worcester with constant, necessary admonishment to action.

Mrs. Marianne Gomes patiently typed the manuscript, leaving me the least possible effort in its handling, and the University Photographic Department accomplished the impossible with faded portraits and the map. The reproductions of the photographs of Carrera, Pavón, Batres, and Molina came from Lorenzo Montúfar's Reseña histórica de Centro-América, that of Montúfar himself from his Discursos (Guatemala, 1923), Batres y Montúfar from José Arzú's Pene Batres íntimo, and the frontispiece of José Milla from the fourth edition (1937) of his own Los Nazarenos.

To my calm and understanding wife, Glen, who complements my own temperament so well, and to each one of those persons mentioned above-- and to others left unmentioned--who have helped me to bring José Milla's story from Guatemala City to Gainesville via New Orleans, I make grateful acknowledgment for the following manuscript.

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## CHAPTER I

### AN INTRODUCTION TO GUATEMALA AND JOSE MILLA

If we remember that no age is static, and that every artist who is not a hopeless conservative or a reactionary must not only come to terms with the culture available to him but must find a way out of the eternal impasse of every contemporary scene, then we shall not expect him to belong to what we call one age or another but to belong to all ages.

James Westfall Thompson, An introduction to medieval Europe (1937), pp. 784-785

#### José Milla y Vidaurre, 1822-1882

Conservative in politics, public servant, journalist, teacher, historian, and romantic writer, José Milla y Vidaurre, known also by his anagrammatical pen name, Salomé Jil, was born in Guatemala City on August 4, 1822, within a year after the provinces of Central America won political independence from Spain. During most of his adult life, until his death on September 30, 1882, it was his destiny to be closely associated with the rise of self-government in the State and later Republic of Guatemala. He served in numerous governmental posts, primarily under the Conservative Party, putting his literary talent at the disposal of the conservative cause.

The literary genius of Pepe Milla, as he is fondly called by his countrymen, came to fruition because his posts as editor of the official newspapers and reviews of the Conservative regime from 1845 until 1871 afforded him a proving ground in his formative years and a publishing outlet in his creative ones. After a brief European exile, he accepted



the post as official government historian from the newly-incumbent Liberal Party, and again took up his pen to serve his country under a regime which had ousted his own party by revolution. Never a turncoat in politics, José Milla nonetheless surmounted the impasse of the political upheavals of the middle years of the nineteenth century in Central America, and, in so doing, he bequeathed his beloved Guatemala a rich literary heritage. And, Pepe Milla has since remained intimately a part of Guatemalan thinking throughout more than a century since his entrance on the public scene there.

Identifying himself closely with the local social scene throughout his lifetime, this man traveled outside the borders of that country only twice. With one exception, his writings treated of historical topics of the Spanish colonial period under the Kingdom of Guatemala, which covered basically the area of present-day Central America, or with keen sketches of local customs of the colonial and republican periods of history. From his pen came major works in the three principal genres of Central American literary expression: sketches of customs, romantic novels, and history. No innovator in the political world, Pepe Milla was always in the front rank of the creators of national literary types, and with his pen he produced a body of writing which to this day has ranked with that of the great men of letters of the Isthmus since European colonization began. His colorful and productive career, with its many facets besides that of romantic writer, has merited far greater attention than it yet has received from students of Latin America, writing in Spanish or in English.

While Milla y Vidaurre was able personally to survive the recur-

rent paralysis characteristic of political life in Guatemala, over the past four centuries the people of his country seldom have enjoyed more than brief periods of sound political health. Guatemala has continued to seek stable and progressive government as a way out of the "eternal impasse" which chains her to the role of one of the underdeveloped countries to be found in some two-thirds of the world today, particularly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.<sup>1</sup> At mid-twentieth century, a long path seemed to lie ahead for Guatemala, and a ridiculous flirtation with international Communism belied the fact that she might have attained any significant measure of political maturity after a century and a quarter of independent political life.

Before proceeding to a study of the life and works of one of the great men in Guatemalan culture, it is basic to an understanding of the over-all significance of the man, his writing, and his times to review, at least in a brief way, the physical and historical setting of the land and people about which he wrote. Against a backdrop picturing historical trends from the origin of European government in Guatemala to the present time, the significance of José Milla's achievements can best be understood, compared, and perhaps measured against the possibilities offered him by the culture in which he lived.

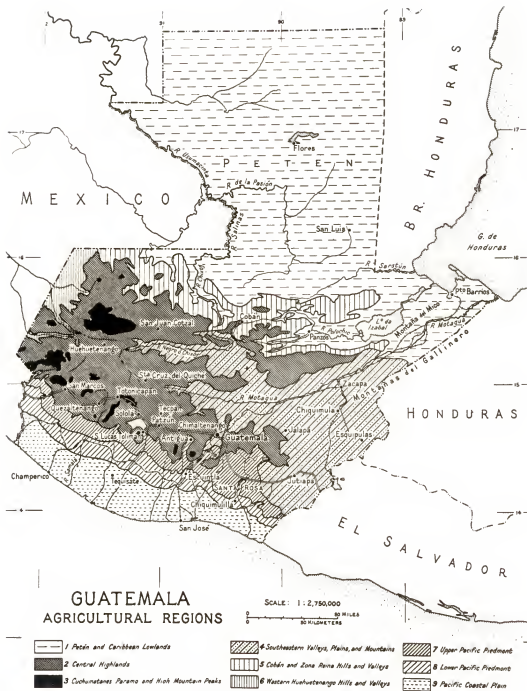
#### From Colony to Republic, 1524-present

How can one characterize Guatemalan culture? Perhaps it can be pictured best as a Spanish civilization superimposed on an Indian one; a colorful indigenous life resurgent beneath centuries of European domination; a history older and more romantic than that of our own country;

an economy based exclusively on the fruits of the tropics and tropical conditions; a rich natural heritage wrested from the earth with the Indian hoe by the remnants of the Maya civilization of pre-Columbian days; and, finally, a series of governments by or for an elite class which have failed to fulfill the needs of the popular majority for government--a history of instability, foreign interference, economic underdevelopment--but, periodically, government by men who aspire to better days and real hope for the Guatemalan people.

Located in the tropical zone, the land of Guatemala has a range of climate varying with altitude from the tierra caliente, or the hot coasts and piedmont, to the intermediate tierra templada of moderate climate, to the tierra fría of the cold highlands. There are two seasons, the rainy months from May to October and the dry ones from November to April. The capital at Guatemala City lies at 4,877 feet in the mountainous area, and it has an average yearly temperature varying at about 72° F.

A 200-mile long plain, averaging 30 miles in width, parallels the Pacific Ocean from Mexico to El Salvador to the south. The Pacific, with Mexico, British Honduras, Honduras, and El Salvador form the political boundaries of the Republic of Guatemala. Rivers flowing from the mountains southward afford irrigation during the dry season, but they are not important for navigation and can only be classified as minor elements in the economy of the country. Three open and unprotected ports lie on the Pacific side of Guatemala--Oco's, Champerico, and San José--but they are seriously limited in their shipping facilities by offshore anchorage. The lowland plain is a thinly populated, malarial area where banana cultivation and cattle raising are the principal activities. The Pacific



**Fig. 2.**—Agricultural regions of Guatemala. For Tequisate in the Pacific Coastal Plain read Tiquisate. Areas of the regions and percentages of total area: Region 1 50,377 sq. km., 46.0%; Region 2 30,072 sq. km., 18.4%; Region 3 1,423 sq. km., 1.3%; Region 4 14,904 sq. km., 7.3%; Region 5 6,300 sq. km., 5.7%; Region 6 1,583 sq. km., 1.4%; Region 7 4,217 sq. km., 2.3%; Region 8 3,715 sq. km., 3.4%; Region 9 6,731 sq. km., 6.2%.

piedmont region, a forested country cut by swift streams, rises from the coast to altitudes of from 300 to 4,500 feet. Settlement in the lower piedmont has been mainly in railroad towns which are supply centers for plantations and cattle ranches. Above 1,500 feet, coffee plantations predominate, but the development of this one main cash crop dates from recent times, mainly after the death of Killa in 1882.

Nearly two-thirds of the republic is mountainous and volcanic. The southernmost mountain range, parallel to the Pacific Ocean, is the Cordillera of the Andes, also called the Sierra Madre, which rises to a general elevation of 8,000 to 10,000 feet. A chain of volcanoes surmounts the cordillera with fertile developed valleys fanning out from their bases in and around the mountains and volcanic cones. Here are to be found the larger towns of the highlands; San Marcos, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, Chimaltenango, Antigua, Guatemala City, and others. Dominating the landscape, both in the highlands and along the Pacific coast, are 33 volcanoes, and the interrelation of physical formations of cones, lakes, basins, of recurring earthquakes, of patterns of land settlement, and of one-story architecture attest to the profound influence of volcanic activity on the land and people of Guatemala.

Most prominent of the cones are Tajumulco, Tacaná, Acatenango, Fuego, Santa María, Atitlán, and Tolimán, varying from just under 14,000 feet to well over 10,000 feet in height. Only two of these are active—the lateral vent of Santa María, called Santiaguito, and Fuego, or Fire, which continues to make good its name. Any investigation of the meaning of life in Guatemala must reckon with these landmarks which literally



afford a Guatemalan profile, a massive and magnificent skyline and setting for the principal cities as well as for the rural areas. Two beautiful lakes, Atitlán and Amatitlán, also stem from the action of the volcanic processes of the remote past. They are mainly recreation centers in the cordillera, and have traditionally been resort areas, particularly Amatitlán because of its proximity to the capital city. Rich volcanic soils, cool climate, and abundant streams have made of the highland region the most heavily populated area of the country.

To the north of the volcanic belt lies the continental divide. Four important ranges of mountains branch off in a northerly direction from the cordillera: the Cuchumatanes, the Sierra de Chamá-Santa Cruz range, the sierras of the Chuacús-Minas-Mico group, and the Sierra de Meredón. Northward and eastward the land slopes off gradually into a region interspersed with mountain ranges and valleys. Three deep river valleys--the Motagua, the Polochic (flowing into Lake Izabal), and the Sarstún--flow into the Gulf of Honduras to form the Caribbean lowlands where Guatemala's first large banana plantations grew up early in the present century. Puerto Barrios, founded in the 1880's, is the major national port, with a natural landlocked harbor, concrete piers, and modern facilities. It is the terminal for the International Railways of Central America (IRCA). On Amatique Bay, at the mouth of the Río Dulce, is the minor port of Livingston. The Atlantic Highway projected by the recently deposed Arbens government terminates at Santo Tomás near Puerto Barrios.

To the north lies the remaining Caribbean lowland forest of the Department of Petén, once the home of the Maya civilization. The surface

is a limestone tableland, 500 to 700 feet in elevation, with a dense tropical rain forest. The Petén represents one-third of the national area, but it is so sparsely settled and inaccessible that it lies beyond effective utilization by the nation even today. Of Guatemala's 37 rivers, 18 flow into the Pacific across the lowland plain already described, 7 flow into the Gulf of Mexico, and 12 into the Gulf of Honduras. Except for the Río Dulce and Lake Izabel, the largest craft to use these waters is the motor launch, while most travel is by simple dugout canoes.<sup>2</sup>

Outstanding among the traditional limitations imposed upon Guatemalan economic development by her physical setting have been the following: a dense concentration of population in the central highlands, which make up 18 percent of the land, and an underdevelopment of the vast lowlands, where the Petén and the Caribbean lowlands alone form 46 percent of the land; a sad lack of transportation and communications facilities due in part to the rough terrain; a one-crop economy at the mercy of foreign markets, coffee today and dye products in the past century; and a small and undeveloped mineral wealth.

It was with the foregoing, generally described, physical setting that European colonization and government has had to deal in the centuries since the discovery of that area by the first Spanish adelantado, or provincial governor, Pedro de Alvarado. Leaving Mexico in 1523 to attempt for Spain the conquest, colonization, and Christianization of perhaps 2,500,000 Maya-Quiché Indians, Alvarado founded the first capital of Guatemala in 1524, calling it Santiago (St. James). In 1566, it was royally entitled the Most Noble and Loyal City of St. James of the Knights



of Guatemala, capital of the province of Guatemala and seat of government of the Captaincy-General of Guatemala, stretching from Yucatán and Tobacco southward to Panama. Throughout the colonial period, it remained a minor political subdivision in the center of the Americas lying between the viceroyalty of New Spain to the west and Spain's dominions in South America, Panama being united to the viceroyalty of Peru after 1567.<sup>3</sup>

From 1549 until 1776, except for a brief period of time (1563-1570), the government of the entire Isthmus of Central America, also called the Kingdom of Guatemala,<sup>4</sup> was located at the city of Santiago. The royally-appointed captains-general in Santiago commanded both provinces and districts in the Kingdom of Guatemala, and the area of their jurisdiction generally lay between 8° and 18° north latitude, with the number of provinces (including the principal ones of Chiapas, Soconusco, Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica) varying from nine at mid-eighteenth century to thirteen in 1787 and fifteen in 1790.<sup>5</sup> There were five provinces at the time of independence: Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.<sup>6</sup>

Santiago was also the center of economic and social life of the Captaincy-General, although colonial Central America was never very important to Spanish overseas trade. A 16th-Century mining industry declined, leaving agriculture and grazing, based on the sedentary, agricultural maiz-producing Indian labor supply, as the major economic activities. Society enjoyed a transplanted European feudal splendor with the customs of chivalry in full sway during official and religious holidays. A magnificent and durable classical western European architecture

adorned the capital city. Armoured knights, jousts, bull fights, cock-fights, feasting, and dancing vied with floods, earthquakes, pestilence, drought, and famine for the attention of the people. Outside the capital, a village aristocracy prevailed, with Indian towns being molded along Spanish lines. European immigration was drastically limited, and the union of European men—for Spanish women seldom came to Guatemala—with Indian women left a lasting ethnic heritage in present-day racial mixtures.

The Caribbean coastal areas of the Kingdom of Guatemala were subjected to regular piratical raids by the "brethren of the coast," the English, French, and Dutch sea-rovers, as the sixteenth and seventeenth century corsairs called themselves.<sup>7</sup> During those two centuries, the creole peoples of the seaports and adjacent small villages learned to fight, or to flee, for their lives in the face of sacking, plunder, ransom, or murder by the pirates of the principal European nations. Tales of pirate raids grew to be a part of provincial thinking and history, and they became traditional in early republican days later on. Milla wrote of these stories in his novels.

For the most part, these sea-rovers were an extralegal group, but, at times, their forays were licensed and outfitted by their monarchs. Some, like Sir Francis Drake, were beknighted for their efforts. All of them sought precious metals, jewels, trade goods, captives, or provisions as needed, but only a few, like Drake in 1579, plied their trade in the Pacific.

At the opening of the eighteenth century, England was the major

opponent of Spain in the Americas, and she doubly harrassed the Spaniards by seeking legally-licensed trade through the asiento trade agreement of 1713 and through continued piratical raids and unauthorized settlements in Spanish areas.<sup>8</sup> Throughout the entire century, constant friction existed between the Spanish guarda costa, or coast guard vessels, and the British merchantmen. On the European continent, England and Spain were at war four times in fifty years, a situation laid to the ambition of England to possess the greatest empire and commerce in the world.<sup>9</sup> On the Caribbean coast of Central America, a military frontier with militia troops from the various settlements grew up, and these volunteers held their own against the English until the end of the colonial period.

In 1773, Santiago was finally destroyed beyond repair by earthquakes, and the site of present-day Guatemala City was sought out and the city inaugurated on January 1, 1776. It was called New Guatemala, modified to Guatemala City today, and it supplanted Santiago, or Antigua Guatemala, which still backs peacefully and beautifully some twenty-five miles from the new capital, durable evidence of the grandeur and solidity of colonial life. With slight modification, the foregoing description of colonial Guatemala applies to much of Guatemalan social and economic life outside the capital and principal towns at the present time! Only the political circumstances have been altered by emancipation from Spain.

On September 15, 1821, the Kingdom of Guatemala gained freedom from Spain in a bloodless revolt, the five provinces becoming independent. The Indian masses--poor, illiterate, speaking little or no Spanish, living a life apart--still formed the bulk of the population. The independent

creoles were ill-prepared for self-government, personal ambition swayed military leaders, and the former provinces of the Central American area were highly apprehensive and jealous of one another. All but El Salvador were annexed to the Mexican empire of Agustín Iturbide from 1822-1823, and then they banded together into the United Provinces of Central America in 1824. The state of Guatemala remained the leader of the turbulent federation until April 17, 1839, when Rafael Carrera declared her to be independent of the federation. Formal proclamation of the Republic of Guatemala came later, on March 21, 1847, at which time her independence was reaffirmed.

In this initial political period, Guatemala experienced her first government based on liberal ideals and reforms to overcome the deplorable conditions inherited from colonial days. Dr. Mariano Gálvez was chief of state from 1831 until 1838, while Guatemala was still a state of the United Provinces. The population was at least two-thirds Indian, and among the remaining ladino, or nonindigenous peoples, the purely white population was infinitely small.<sup>10</sup> Illiteracy was above 87 percent, with public education grossly neglected.<sup>11</sup> Racial homogeneity was nil, and the people were ignorant and living under aggravated social conditions. There was no export of coffee or bananas, only the dye product, cochineal, in small quantity. Civil wars prior to the Gálvez regime had left the economy drained of productivity in both agriculture and industry, already limited under the best of circumstances.<sup>12</sup> Towns were dirty, without paving, sewerage, or any kind of comforts, and few roads existed to provide communication. These squalid conditions of the Guatemalan area at

its beginning stages of republican life clearly pointed up the glaring need for betterment in government, the economy, and society.

The Gálvez reforms, peculiar to the conditions of their historical times, treated of specific conditions now long-solved for the most part, although as general problems they have persisted until the present time. Essential reforms were invoked in four matters: laws of 1832 and 1835 established public primary educational institutions and provided funds for their operation; certain holidays were eliminated to reduce idleness; for the public health, cemeteries were secularized and their location outside populated areas was decreed; and, the tithe was eliminated. The Catholic Church was united with the state at the time, and several of these measures sought to reduce the power of the ecclesiastical orders.

Unsuccessful reforms were sought in the following matters: the organization of citizen-soldiers into a civil militia in 1831; the promulgation of a municipal law to provide an appointive mayor and an assembly of municipal representatives to treat common problems of local government; a modification of the law of contributions by suppressing such fundamental taxes as that on meats, sales tax (alcabala internal), the census, and the polltax,<sup>13</sup> among others; and, the provision for free will and testament, civil marriage and divorce, and the right of children, legitimate or not, to share their father's inheritance. While these measures were passed, the succeeding government re-established the clergy in power, so they were not successful reforms.

Dr. Gálvez's government attempted to set up trial by jury, under



the terms of the then current Edward Livingston Penal Code, and the legal body adopted the codes in 1834 and 1835, putting them into practice on January 1, 1838. Indigenous jurors lacked a knowledge of Spanish, travel was difficult for jurors coming to a trial, litigation meant delay and expense and time lost from harvests and fields, and popular opposition was immediate. The code was suspended on March 13, 1838.<sup>14</sup> Direct election of consejeros, or counsellors, to assist the executive power also failed, for the Indian has never conceived of the idea of the vote. His vote is manipulated by his employer or by the government itself more often than not.

In these initial experiments in self-government, Gálvez also tried to stimulate light industry like glass and paper factories and the production of sulphuric acid for an infant lithography industry. He encouraged the import of farm machinery, and he urged the planting of coffee. He even sought through legislation to stimulate immigration by European colonizing companies, and Utopian colonies actually reached Guatemala during his term of office.<sup>15</sup> As a must for any Guatemalan president, many improvements were made to beautify Guatemala City.

The national assembly insisted that Dr. Gálvez continue for a second term in 1835, when his four years were up,<sup>16</sup> but his second term ended in flight before the Indian troops of Rafael Carrera early in 1838. A schism in the Liberal ranks left Gálvez in the minority group of his own party, the opposition group being led by Liberal José Francisco Barrundia. Gálvez refused to use his executive power against the Conservatives either, and the Catholic Church took advantage of the

discontent of the Indians to use their ignorance and superstition against Gálvez. When cholera entered the country from Mexico in 1837, Gálvez's doctors, who were treating the water supplies, were accused instead of poisoning the natives in retaliation for their opposition to government reform measures, and in the resultant struggle for power Rafael Carrera emerged as the military leader of the Indians and the willing tool of the Conservatives.

After a decade of local war and civil chaos, Carrera emerged as the power behind the Conservative Party in a coalition of aristocratic *serviles*, and the military under his own grip, and that party retained control of the forces of government for the so-called Thirty-Year Regime from early 1839 until their own defeat by a liberal revolution in 1871. The events and nature of the Carrera regime will be treated amply in the various chapters in which José Milla's activities as a government official in the Conservative Party will be related.

Miguel García Granados and Justo Rufino Barrios were the liberal military leaders who finally brought about the downfall of the last of the Carrera regime in 1871. Carrera was no longer alive since he had died in 1865, leaving his chosen successor, Vicente Cerna, in command of the Conservative regime. García Granados became president of the country in 1871, and much of the success of the victory went to him because he had taken money contributed by Guatemalan liberals to buy Remington and Winchester repeater rifles in the United States and transport them to the troops in southern Mexico.<sup>17</sup> This nature of the invasion, as well as the name of "campaign of liberation," smacks of the recent revolution



launched from Honduras on the other border by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and his "army of liberation," again only a change in outward circumstances from Remingtons to jet planes but the same general problem is involved and remains unsolved.

General Justo Rufino Barrios, a more dynamic and forceful figure than the moderate Liberal García Granados, replaced his comrade-in-arms as president on June 4, 1873. From that time until his death on April 2, 1885, he dominated the country as supreme leader; his liberal regime was, indeed, a dictatorial one. He achieved his greatest and most lasting reforms in ecclesiastical matters and in local government, two of the more persistent problems of Guatemalan political life. In all, he brought significant changes to seven general areas of national life, each of these a type of the same general problems left unsolved since 1821.

The elimination of the Catholic Church from any real measure of control in civil affairs was fundamental to his program, and Barrios took the following stringent measures to separate the clergy from powers restored them under the Carrera regime: the Jesuits were ordered from the country and their order, with other ecclesiastical orders, was dissolved; tithes were suppressed; certain properties were confiscated; then, following a Catholic protest, all monasteries abolished and their properties nationalized, monks remaining in Guatemala to be secularized. Succeeding decrees led to the government taking over religious foundations and endowments, closing nunneries, forbidding clerical garb on the street, denying the right for processions, precluding clerics from teaching, granting civil marriage as obligatory, and finally civil baptism too.

These measures were finally incorporated in the constitution set up in 1879, and most of the conditions have been observed in Guatemala down to the present time. It was a serious blow to the previous economic and political power of the Catholic Church.

By decree, in 1879, in an effort to bring orderly government to the departments and municipalities, the office of jefe político, or political chief, was established to centralize control of local government. The jefe was to be named by the president and removed at his discretion, and he was encharged to keep public order, protect life, property, and the roads. He was to apprehend criminals, control assembly and keep the peace, regulate relations of Indian and ladino, punish drunkards, troublemakers, and vagrants. It was his lot to inspect hotels, issue and inspect passports to travelers, and direct police activities if there were policemen in his department. Other duties were to cooperate with local courts, enforce law, collect taxes, supervise schools, encourage agriculture and industry, explore local mineral resources, supervise pastures, enclosures, and labor laws. He was to gather census statistics every four years, check on the clergymen in his area, and try to encourage the Indian to take up ladino clothing and manners. For one man, this was quite an assignment, and today these duties do fall to a departmental governor appointed by the president of the republic--an outgrowth of the jefe político.

Other attempts to improve the lot of the nation were significant. Justo Rufino Barrios, like Gálvez before him, placed great importance on education, but his Liberal successors did not share this attitude down to

1944. Barrios created a Ministry of Education, founded a central normal school, six superior schools, and he called for compulsory education for children from 6 to 14 years of age. Most communications and telecommunications today can be traced to Barrios' regime for their initiation or for great improvement. An international road to El Salvador was started, and, in other public works, railroads, ports, street railways, bridges, cables, telegraph, telephone, and the postal service all received attention. Economic reforms laid heavy emphasis on improved agricultural conditions, and the production of the cash crop of coffee was perhaps the most significant economic step for Guatemala in the past century. Banana cultivation, quinine, and cotton were all encouraged, and, with coffee, these are the mainstays of Guatemalan economy today. In public finance, the International Bank of Guatemala was established in 1877, and the government itself lent aid to the establishment of the Banco Agrícola de Occidente, the western agricultural bank which furnished economic aid to the all-important highlands which are today the economic heart of the republic.

Finally, some minor steps were taken in Indian legislation, but this was a neglected aspect of the reform program of Barrios because he felt the future of the nation depended rather on European immigration. The president considered the Indian to be of an inferior race, and, as can be seen reflected in the duties of the jefe político, Barrios sought rather to draw the Indian to ladino ways of life. His characteristic optimism in other reforms was not present in his approach to the indigenous peoples of Guatemala.<sup>18</sup>

In the realm of foreign affairs, General Barrios was, for the most part, caught up in the same nineteenth century ills as his predecessors, but one bright spot was his successful trip to the United States and Europe in 1882. Chester A. Arthur was president, and on his trip to New York and Washington Barrios was welcomed and banqueted at the White House. Unable to resist the lure of Central American union, General Barrios issued a decree on February 28, 1885, creating the union of Central America; he was to be supreme chief. Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and El Salvador opposed the union, the United States and Mexico frowned on forcible union, and in the succeeding struggle, on April 2, 1885, General Justo Rufino Barrios was shot and killed in El Salvador in a military campaign to bring about the union. His biographer said of this:

The death of Barrios was a fitting close to his life. He had lived intensely and he died in action. He could have desired no more appropriate end. The death was worthy of the man. In it he shamed forever the common herd of Central American politicians who squeeze all they can out of their countries and then retire to foreign lands to enjoy their fortunes. Whatever may have been his faults, and they were many, he was what we call in Spanish un hombre consecuente (A predictable man, a man of his word), one who followed out his course to the end, without hesitancy and without fear.<sup>19</sup>

In the fifty-nine years following the death of Barrios, three men were in the presidency for a combined period of forty-three years, for the passing of the aristocratic-clerical-military age before Barrios's reforms marked the advent of a new age of efficient, dictatorial government.<sup>20</sup> Of these three succeeding presidents, each nominally a Liberal, none seriously implemented the liberal measures of the revolution of 1871. Each man was forced out of office by military revolt; José María Reyna Barrios, elected in 1891, was assassinated in 1898; Manuel Estrada Cabrera

(1898-1920) was jailed after a popular uprising; and, Jorge Ubico (1931-1944) also left office after a popular revolt against his dictatorship. The power of none of these men had rested on the popular ballot freely cast, and each had gone out by revolt from the presidency. The impetus of the reforms of the Liberal Revolution of 1871 simply was not sustained by subsequent "Liberals," and the aftermath to each succeeding revolution failed more and more to bring any adherence to a clear policy to improve the lot of the citizenry.

In 1944, after fourteen years of paternal dictatorship--he was popularly called tata Ubico (Papa Ubico)--General Jorge Ubico turned over his government to General Federico Ponce Vaidés in July, only to have Ponce hurled from office in October by popular upheaval. The device of giving over office to a henchman to satisfy popular pressures is as old as Latin American politics, but Latin politicians never fail to at least try it. From that "October Revolution"--a phrase smugly used by Communist-inspired elements in later days--grew the reform government of Dr. Juan José Arévalo Bermejo, who returned from self-exile in Argentina to become president of Guatemala on March 15, 1945. And, he served out his term of office too, turning the presidency to Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in 1951. Neither Dr. Gálvez nor General Barrios were able to control the executive power and actually turn it over to a successor, nor any other president in republican history in that country.

Hailed as a schoolteacher president, Dr. Arévalo brought a combination of dignity and strength to the executive office that had not often been there before. A liberal leader and a man with an academic, rather



than a political or military background, Juan José Arévalo successfully countered thirty-two different attempts of one kind or another against his control of the government in the six years he served the presidency.<sup>21</sup> His imposing stature, his great poise, his stately carriage, and particularly his excellent oratorical ability were the attributes of a leader.<sup>22</sup> In the course of his administration, Dr. Arévalo inaugurated reform measures in all important national matters except that of land reform, which fell to his successor Colonel Arbenz.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Arévalo's administration was to afford the country a true labor movement, for the first time in its history, through the Labor Code of 1947. It was one of the tragedies of the Arévalo-Arbenz regime that the labor movement was gradually captured by leaders dedicated to the ideas of international Communism. Under Arbenz, a unified and centralized labor movement emerged in the power of Víctor Manuel Gutiérrez, the most prominent and sincere Communist leader in Guatemala, who headed up the 225,000-worker General Confederation of Guatemalan Workers in 1952. Labor organization extended to agriculture, industry, education, and even syndicates of employers, domestic servants being the only large unorganized group of workers. Syndicalism was a boon to the laboring classes, but the presence of the Communists brought censure to what was otherwise an outstanding innovation in the country's history.

As with Gálvez and Barrios, the field of educational reform was a favorite with Dr. Arévalo. In popular education, he made instruction available to the rural peoples, expanded the Ministry of Public Education,

permitted a powerful teachers' union to slowly improve their lot, and achieved significant gains in school plants and attendance--the statistics of which were a far cry from the rudimentary beginnings under Dr. Gálvez in 1831.<sup>23</sup> Other measures included the foundation of a National Literacy Campaign, a National Indian Institute, a rural Cultural Mission program to instruct in sanitation and public health; the expansion of the National Symphony Orchestra and National Ballet; and, the construction of a national Olympic Stadium to foster physical education. The University of San Carlos was granted its nominal autonomy from the government, and the cooperation of Dr. Arévalo aided in the University's expansion to include new faculties and schools in Humanities, Agronomy, Journalism, and a Summer School for foreign students.

In public finance, the Bank of Guatemala was founded as a central bank, a National Credit Agency emerged to dispense private loans, and, under Arbenz, a National Agrarian Bank was inaugurated to accompany the land redistribution program after 1952.

Reform in the nation's economy was a major plank in the platform of the Arévalo-Arbenz governments. The Institute for the Development of Production (Instituto de Fomento de la Producción) was decreed in 1948. The highway system was greatly improved and extended with the aid of the United States government on the only international highway in Guatemala, the Roosevelt Highway. Under Arbenz, a highway to the Atlantic, first contemplated in José Milla's day, approached completion as the Castillo Armas revolutionary forces attacked in June, 1954. Due to the sustained high market price for coffee, a product which accounts for some ninety



percent of the national export, the economy of Guatemala between 1945 and 1954 was at its highest level in the history of the republic. This high coffee price, more than any other factor, made possible the high national budgets with which to carry out the reform movement; ironically, the final step by Arbenz, from the reform program into Communism, came through a program largely supported by the sale of somewhere around ninety percent of Guatemalan coffee to the market in the United States.

Social legislation brought a new Ministry of Public Health and Social Aid under Arévalo. It was a key reform to stamp out the common maladies so long responsible for the low standard of living of the people, and it included sanitation, dietary education and research, spraying, immunization, venereal disease control, hospital maintenance and medical attention, and cooperation with international agencies like the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Nutrition Institute of Central America and Panama. In 1948, the Social Security Institute was founded to provide hospitalization, indemnities, and accident and disability pensions for workers. Its importance was that,

Prior to January, 1948, when the Social Security System was inaugurated, the workers had no protection in case of accidents, illness, old age, or incapacity. . . . In a very short time, the Social Security System has grown into one of the most important institutions of the country, in regard to the services it renders and the magnitude of its finances, hospitals, and medical facilities.<sup>24</sup>

The final reform measure under Arévalo and Arbenz was that of the Agrarian Reform Law (June 17, 1952), the only plank of the October Revolution which fell under Arbenz' initiation. The traditional pattern of land tenure had created a glaring social abuse in Guatemala as brought

out by the 1950 agricultural census. About seventy percent of the arable land was held by 2.2 percent of the total number of landowners, while 22 large landholders alone controlled 13.6 percent of the useable land. At the same time, more than 259,000 small owners held less than about 2 acres apiece. Such conditions pointed up the perennial backwardness of Guatemala.

Land reform was a question of the haves and the have-nots, and reaction to the agrarian bill in Guatemala was greatly varied. Many plantation owners felt that it was fair in the case of undeveloped lands, but abused in its execution at times. One long-time observer and friend of the reform governments saw the move as "broadly conceived" and obviously favored it.<sup>25</sup> At the opposite pole was a recently-ejected member of the Catholic clergy who saw in the land reform a "diabolical scheme" on the part of the Reds to convert Guatemala into a Soviet satellite, an observation which in its entirety failed to once mention religion and the work of his church to help the situation.<sup>26</sup> Without any doubt, the strongest internal support for the Castillo Armas "army of liberation" came from the funds of disgruntled and dispossessed Guatemalan finqueros, including foreign landholders.<sup>27</sup>

A Protestant missionary, a man who had been a lifelong resident of Guatemala's rural highland area, noted the controversial nature of the reform but told of the changes wrought in the first year of the agrarian program. The Protestant group in Quetzaltenango split over the measure, with the townspeople--"shopkeepers, commission men and small landowners who lived in town"--telling the Indians, day-laborers, that

it would be evil to accept the land from the government. Nonetheless, the Indians took the government lands and went off to form their own congregation, and the missionary-observer felt the results were beneficial for the "little" people of Guatemala. This conclusion might well be expected from a staunch advocate of Barrios, of Protestantism, and of the democratic process for people in general, but, due to his presence in Guatemala, his intimate contact with and knowledge of the small Indian laborer and landless element, and his proven erudition in Guatemalan history and politics, this man's appraisal had more conviction than government reports, the fleeting descriptions of newspapermen, or the chagrin of an offended clergyman.

His report of the land reform pointed to real advancement of the eternal problem of Guatemala: what to do to raise the standard of living of the bulk of the population--the Indians--in order to incorporate them into national life.

Things really began to hum, economically and ecclesiastically. Most of the 17 families in the new church received lots of land already planted to coffee with generous sprinklings of bananas in between the coffee trees. The new agrarian bank, advanced them money to live on and to get in their crops. The old plantation coffee-processing mill was put to work as a cooperative. Certain of the more enterprising among the agrarians bought up the bananas of their companions and sold them to the Standard Fruit Co. by the truck-load. Meanwhile the congregation put up a Church building, slightly [sic] better than their own dwellings, called a Quiché Bible Institute graduate as layworker and began an aggressive program in the community. Sunday School attendance has averaged 40-50, conversions are frequent and several weddings long over due, have been solemnized. It was while attending one of these recently that I could talk to most of the heads of families and observed what the agrarian law had meant to them. The coffee crop was in, the cash advances and interest charges on the same, the cooperative fees and all other expenses canceled and each family had from \$400.00 to \$600.00 clear in cold cash, more than any of them had ever possessed at one time before. They had never had

it half as good. Most of the men had acquired wrist watches, some of the families phonographs and one or two had put on shoes. All were better clothed and fed than ever before. They were buying expensive medicines they had never been able to afford before to combat Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Church which had left all its well-to-do supporters in town had a good balance on hand and all debts paid. Plans are under way to put up a new Church building, tho the present one is scarcely a year old. One of the elders slipped me \$100.00 "for the work". (I thot the German manager had done well when he gave me \$50.00 thirty years ago). . . .

But I think I can safely aver that the agrarian law has not done any more damage spiritually than a few "gushers" would do to a similar group of Presbyterians in a Texas town.<sup>28</sup>

That was a grass-root description of the pathos of a people who still dare to hope for social advancement, and of what happens to them when it finally comes.

There were other reforms taken to be sure, but the significant innovations and far-reaching changes came in the same basic problems raised over the years since 1821: the institutions of labor, education, public finance, public health, social security, economy, and land tenure patterns. For those concerned with the development of effective and democratic government in Latin America as a whole, there can be no other conclusion than that, outside of the unbelievably stupid error of including Communist-inspired elements in the operation of the reform measures, the Arévalo-Arbenz reform government had been generally beneficial for Guatemala.

In the downfall of the Arévalo-Arbenz program, the same old factions objected to everything good or bad. This will make an interesting comparison to former times like those in which José Milla lived. Internally, there was a good deal of opposition from the Catholic Church, large landholders and employers who bore the brunt of the cost of the

reforms, extreme nationalists who resented foreign businessmen and visiting governmental consultants, the students from the University of San Carlos, the unemployed army officers of the Ubico era and those expelled--like Castillo Armas--during the Arévalo regime, and the Communists who stirred up discontent and brought down wrath on the head of the government, both when they got what they wanted and when they did not. Externally, the early ineptitude of the United States policy after 1944, or lack of it,<sup>29</sup> toward Guatemala gave way to a determined position under Ambassador John E. Peurifoy<sup>30</sup> in 1953 to oppose the Arbenz regime and bring about its downfall.<sup>31</sup> Discontent among the members of the Organization of Central American States led to tacit support and aid for the rebel forces under Castillo Armas. And, finally, the deepening cleavage of the Soviet Union and the Western powers made Guatemala's Red tinge increasingly costly.

In the city of San Salvador, Republic of El Salvador, on July 2, 1954, an historic document was signed by Colonel Elfege H. Monsón, President of the Government Junta of Guatemala, and Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, the commander-in-chief of the army of liberation in Guatemala.<sup>32</sup> The fundamental objective pursued by these two leaders was to organize a democratic, representative government for the Republic of Guatemala to replace that of the deposed president Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, who had governed since 1951 with an increasingly leftist Communist-line regime. By October, Castillo Armas emerged as president of Guatemala by a plebiscite in which he was the only candidate for whom the voter could cast his ballot, either for or against, by oral vote. A constituent



assembly, elected at the same time, later extended the president's term of office to March 15, 1960.<sup>33</sup>

President Castillo, 40 years of age, was variously described as small and slender, diffident, deadpan, a sometimes-colonel and career officer in the Guatemalan armed forces, who emerged from almost complete obscurity to assume control of the highest executive office of his nation. His own public relations staff hastened to add: ". . . he is outstanding as a man of mature judgement, pleasant manners, military bearing, an eloquent speaker, polite, and modest."<sup>34</sup> Early in 1955, after a visit to Central America, Vice President Nixon of the United States related that he found ". . . an honest, a dedicated, and a courageous leader in President Castillo Armas."<sup>35</sup> Courageous was the word that the country found for him, as he faced the problems of the legacy he inherited from Communist corruption; the atrocities committed by the Reds as they decamped, terror-stricken; the theft of national funds; the popular discontent; and, the growing pains of land reform, to mention the worst of the unstable political, social, and economic forces he faced.

Anti-Communism, the war cry of the liberation forces in June, 1954, was the theme which dictated the first steps taken by the Castillo government. In restoring order to the machinery of government, that foreign ideology and its agents were both sought out for elimination from the Guatemalan scene. As Castillo proceeded to consolidate his executive power and to neutralize former fellow-traveler elements, his various public declarations indicated that he planned either to maintain, or to intensify, all the major reform measures of the previous years since 1945,



with the exception, of course, that Communists would not share in his program. However, the only realistic path that could be expected was that of a period of gradual consolidation by President Castillo Armas until his regime could see the most secure path of action to follow.<sup>36</sup> Since mid-1954, most indications have been that Colonel Castillo Armas will turn to rule by force to achieve stability in Guatemala.<sup>37</sup>

The principle obstacles to national prosperity--all marks of economic underdevelopment--are fundamentally the same as those of the years since 1821, in a modernized form; an agricultural program is needed; roads, hospitals, schools, and a low-cost housing development must be built; tourism and foreign investments should be fostered; and, a new electrical generating capacity ought to be installed.<sup>38</sup> Innovations have occurred in republican Guatemala since 1821, but to a great extent the republic suffers from the recurring problems of lack of popular education, economic underdevelopment, land and labor inequalities, militarism, and a large and unassimilated Indian population. Genuine understanding of Guatemala today must be based on a knowledge of the historically deep-rooted problems, not of the sensational and transient ones like the recent Red beachhead.

Since independence, controlling political forces have represented the interests of aristocratic landowners, the Catholic Church, and the military elements. Reform governments have operated in three brief periods, each of the first two followed by periods of dictatorship lasting 30 and 59 years respectively. Dictatorial governments have wiped out or let die the reform measures of the previous liberal regimes. Historically,

the significant changes in the Guatemalan lot came with the establishment of coffee and banana cultivation, which have provided cash crops, revenue, employment, and essential communication facilities in roads, docks, and railways.

The evolution of the country has been impeded by the fact that not one but three separate and slowly merging civilizations share the processes of national life. Indian Guatemala remains aloof and nearly static; colonial Guatemala, symbolized by the former capital at Antigua, is timeless and ever so slow to change; republican Guatemala seeks progress in a modern world. Hence, pagan Indian rites, devout Roman Catholicism reminiscent of Carrera's day, and Barrios-inspired freedom of religion for Protestant and Jew can coexist in Guatemala and a similar trichotomy can be pointed out in most national activity.<sup>39</sup>

In 1950, at mid-twentieth century, Guatemala was faced by the same old impasse: the country was made up of about 55 percent Indian peoples, speaking 20 different languages;<sup>40</sup> the national illiteracy was 72 percent, exemplified by a newspaper circulation of only 19 copies for each 1,000 inhabitants--the lowest in Central America;<sup>41</sup> agriculture afforded employment for three-fourths of the workers, produced nine-tenths of the exports, and yet the least progress in education and economy was shared by the rural segment of the population; the urban areas, particularly Guatemala City, dominated national life; and, the land still belonged to the very few, who did not in themselves embody a large enough class with sufficient interest to develop a domestic economy to bring a needed change upward in the subsistence-level standard of living in

Guatemala.

### José Milla and Guatemala

José Milla y Vidaurre was born in and lived through the middle period of the nineteenth century in Guatemala. Politically, Milla's lifetime spanned both the initial efforts of Guatemala to achieve self-government under Gálvez and Carrera and the solid period of the Barrios' reform government which began the liberal cycle of politics in that country. In the final analysis, José Milla belonged to the historical age of Gálvez and Carrera in his political action and in most of his thinking. Serving the Conservative Party with his pen was the vehicle he used to survive politically and to gain literary expression. However, in the literary art which he created, Milla belonged to no age. His historical writing, both formal history and historical novel, characterized the pre-Columbian, the Spanish colonial, and the contemporary scenes.

As recently as 1950, a sociological study of Guatemala, used as a text in the University of San Carlos, referred the students of sociology to José Milla's sketches of social customs with the following admonition:

As for the customs of the three human social groups [indigenous, mixed, and European], they also vary, and since this is quite an extensive topic we will only indicate that the customs of the white and mixed Europeans and of the elite classes have been in part illuminated by José Milla, with very little need in succeeding years for editing or correcting what that author wrote.<sup>42</sup>

Here is an invitation to the interested student of modern society to look further into the life and works of Pepe Milla for a clue to a description of Central American culture, or at least that important segment of it reflected in the story of colonial and republican Guatemala.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Nathan L. Whetten, "Land reform in a modern world," Rural Sociology, XIX (December, 1954), 329.

<sup>2</sup>Reference books and articles used here for a general view of Guatemalan geography were the following: E. C. Higbee, "Agricultural regions of Guatemala," Geographical Review, XXXVII (April, 1947), 672-680; Preston M. James, Latin America (New York, 1942), pp. 672-680; V. Kelsey and L. de Jongh Osborne, Four keys to Guatemala (Rev. ed.; New York, 1948), pp. 305-318; Felix Webster McBryde, Cultural and historical geography of southwest Guatemala (Washington [1947]), pp. 1-7.

<sup>3</sup>G. H. Haring, The Spanish empire in America (New York, 1947), p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>Chester Lloyd Jones, Guatemala past and present (Minneapolis, 1940), pp. 23-24.

<sup>5</sup>Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of Central America (San Francisco, 1882-1887), II, 713-716.

<sup>6</sup>Dana G. Munro, The five republics of Central America (New York, 1918), p. 24; Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, Historia de la federación de la América Central, 1823-1840 (Madrid, 1951), pp. 34-35.

<sup>7</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., II, 482.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 586-587.

<sup>9</sup>Charles E. Chapman, A history of Spain (New York, 1918), pp. 384-385.

<sup>10</sup>Jorge García Granados, Evolución sociológica de Guatemala (Guatemala [1926]), pp. [93]-164. This volume contains two essays, the second of which is entitled "Ensayo sobre el gobierno del Dr. Mariano Gálvez," used here in its entirety.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 105. There were only 40 primary schools in the entire country. In the capital city, there were 3 primary schools, 2 secondary schools, 5 private schools, and the university.

<sup>12</sup>Alejandro Marure, Efemérides de los hechos notables acaecidos en la república de Centro-América desde el año de 1821 hasta el de 1842 (Guatemala, 1895), pp. 149-151. Marure was also the author of a study

of the revolutions in Central America from 1811 to 1834, and he lists 61 different military engagements from 1822 until 1832, to give some idea of the extent of the chaos caused by these civil wars.

<sup>13</sup>The taxes on sealed paper, aguardiente (whiskey), and chicha (another corn beverage) were retained and are still in evidence today. Taxes were attempted on property and real property holdings, and there was a personal income tax for those with a sufficient income upon which to levy such a tax.

<sup>14</sup>Marure, op. cit., p. 90. This author is the source for exact dating of events in the early independence period, and his general chronicles of these events are clear and very useful.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>16</sup>He was chosen constitutional leader for the country on August 24, 1831, and the assembly insisted that he continue for a second term on February 25, 1835.

<sup>17</sup>Paul Burgess, Justo Rufino Barrios (2d ed.; Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, 1946), p. 70. This study of General Barrios, written in English, is the best to date.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>20</sup>Munro, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

<sup>21</sup>La Estrella de Panamá, July 9, 1951 [Newspaper].

<sup>22</sup>Carleton Beals, "School-teacher president," Asia and the Americas, XXXVI (August, 1946), p. 365.

<sup>23</sup>Republic of Guatemala, Government Information Bureau, Guatemala, No. 4 (June 15, 1953), pp. 1-3. The following chart is compiled from statistics shown in the cited number of this bulletin that originated in the office of the presidency:

PUBLIC EDUCATION: 1944 and 1952

	1944			1952		
	No.	Pupils	Staff	No.	Pupils	Staff
Kindergarten . .	34	5,065	128	49	11,127	312
Urban Primary . .	700	66,348	2,530	750	90,641	3,816
Rural Primary . .	998	35,799	1,148	1,559	51,091	1,752
Normal and						
High School . .	13	1,816	242	19	6,488	719
Vocational and						
Technical . . .	10	2,460	217	15	4,507	374
Total . . .	1,755	111,533	4,265	2,392	163,854	6,973



## CERTIFIED TEACHERS' SALARIES

Per Month	Rural	Urban	Guatemala City
1944	*\$12.00	\$24.00	\$33.00
1952	60.00	75.00	75.00

\*The quetzal (\$) is the unit of currency, on par with the United States dollar.

<sup>24</sup> José Rolz Bennett, "Guatemala--its resources and recent evolution," The Caribbean: its economy, ed. by A. Curtis Wilgus (Gainesville, 1954), pp. 79-80.

<sup>25</sup> Carleton Beals, "Guatemala's land reform," The Christian Century, LXXI (June 23, 1954), pp. 762-764.

<sup>26</sup> Sebastian Buccellato, "I saw the reds taking over," This Week Magazine (Florida Times-Union Magazine Section, June 27, 1954), pp. 7 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Milton Bracker, "The lessons of the Guatemalan struggle," The New York Times Magazine, July 11, 1954, pp. 11 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Burgess, "Presbyterian agrarians," Guatemala News [Organ of the Guatemala Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.], XLIV (November-December, 1953), pp. 4-5.

<sup>29</sup> Samuel Guy Inman, "Washington loses the way," Worldover Press, January 21, 1955, pp. 1-3. This discussion is found in the information service of the Worldover Press.

<sup>30</sup> Time Magazine, LXIV (July 26, 1954), 34. It is to be hoped that the assignment which Ambassador Pourifoy carried out with such showmanship will not one day bring unfortunate censure from Latin America. The following lyrical evidence that the role was consciously played appeared in Time not long after the anti-Communist victory:

"The Columbia (S.C.) State published the latest poetical work of Mrs. John E. Pourifoy, 42, wife of the U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala: 'Sing a song of quetzals / Pockets full of peace! / The junta's in the palace-- / They've taken out a lease. / The Commies are in hiding / Just across the street; / To the embassy of Mexico / They beat a quick retreat. / And pistol-packing Pourifoy / Looks mighty optimistic-- / For the land of Guatemala / Is no longer Communist!' "

<sup>31</sup> Flora Lewis, "Ambassador extraordinary: John Pourifoy," The New York Times Magazine, July 18, 1954, p. 9. This article discusses Mr. Pourifoy, his mission, the overthrow of the Arbens government, and the truce negotiations.

<sup>32</sup> U. S. Department of State, Office of Intelligence, External Research Staff, Daily reports of foreign radio broadcasts, July 2, 1954. The text of this document is given in English translation in the place



cited here. This translation service was furnished by the Department of State with a dateline of July 2, 1954, from the city of San Salvador. Selected and unclassified news such as this, recorded from international radio service and translated, is made available in English in mimeographed form.

<sup>33</sup>Noticias. Weekly digest of hemisphere reports. September 28, October 5, October 12, and November 9, 1954. This useful summary of the political events of October and November, 1954, describes the general elections of October 10, 1954, in which Guatemalan voters chose 66 delegates for a National Constitutional Assembly to write a new constitution to replace that of 1945. The voters indicated at the same time by oral plebiscite that they wished Colonel Castillo Armas to continue as president. In early November, the assembly approved a decree extending Castillo's term of office to March 15, 1960.

<sup>34</sup>Time Magazine, June 28, July 5, July 12, July 19, and July 26, 1954; Daily reports of foreign radio broadcasts, July 2, July 13, and July 16, 1954; Noticias, July 13, July 20, 1954; New York Times, July 7, 1954. The summary of events in Guatemala and of the declarations of the new chief of state upon his entrance into power have been gathered from these various news sources.

<sup>35</sup>Richard M. Nixon, "Meeting the people of Central America," The Department of State Bulletin, XXXII (April 11, 1955), 591.

<sup>36</sup>Julio Vielman, "Stabilization of the post-revolutionary government in Guatemala," Journal of International Affairs, IX (1955), 73.

<sup>37</sup>David Graham, "Castillo's Guatemala--the clock turns back," The Nation, CLXXX (May 21, 1955), 440-442.

<sup>38</sup>"Guatemala--six months later," Noticias, December 14, 1954, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup>Kelsey and Osborne, op. cit., pp. [1]-2.

<sup>40</sup>Republic of Guatemala, Guatemala, September 1, 1953, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>United Nations, Statistical yearbook (New York, 1954), pp. 546-547. The 19 copies for each 1,000 inhabitants in Guatemala can be compared with 615 per 1,000 inhabitants in England, 490 in Sweden, 353 in Japan, 346 in the United States, and 238 in France.

<sup>42</sup>Jorge del Valle Mathen, Sociología guatemalteca (Guatemala, 1950), pp. 142-143.

## CHAPTER II

### JOSE MILLA: FAMILY, CHILDHOOD AND FORMATIVE YEARS

Each of us in good time, fulfill's his destiny:  
Yours a golden sither, mine a pen of steel.  
José Milla

#### Colonial Origins of the Milla Family

Juan Manuel Milla and his wife, María Josefa Milla, both reputed to be of old Spanish families of the town of Gracias á Dios, situated in the Province of Honduras in the Kingdom of Guatemala, were the great-grandparents of José Milla y Vidsurre.<sup>1</sup> Gracias á Dios, one of the earliest colonial Honduran settlements, was founded in 1536 by Gonzalo de Alvarado acting for his brother the adelantado, Pedro de Alvarado.<sup>2</sup> It was located about 106 leagues from the seat of government of the Kingdom at Antigua (Santiago)<sup>3</sup> as a favorable site along the main road from Guatemala to the Province of Honduras.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Gage, the famous English-American traveler of the seventeenth century, thought Honduras to be a difficult terrain for travel and a poor area besides. An exception to his general appraisal of Honduras was Gracias á Dios:

The chief place in it [Honduras] for health and good living is the valley which is called Gracias a Dios, there are some rich farms of cattle and wheat; but because it lieth ag near to the country of Guatemala as to Comayagua, and on this [Guatemalan] side the ways are better than on that, therefore most of the wheat is transported to Guatemala and to towns about it than to Comayagua or Trujillo.<sup>5</sup>

Gracias á Dios appeared in this and other writings to have had a closer economic connection with the seat of government at Antigua, to which it was connected politically as well, than to Comayagua at 38 leagues distant in its own province.

During the long years of pirate activity on the Caribbean coast, Gracias á Dios, along with other towns, also served the Captaincy-General with military troops to ward off foreign invasions. After the middle of the eighteenth century, when Spain attempted to bolster her overseas defenses against the strong challenge of England,<sup>6</sup> the royal officials in Antigua continued to rely on recruitment of militiamen along the military frontier for the most part. In 1779, when the English captured the strategic coastal fort of San Fernando de Omoa, on the Honduran coast north of Gracias á Dios, these volunteer troops had to form the bulk of any defense of the Kingdom. In general, militia troops were poorly disciplined, badly equipped, seriously lacking in training, and only a portion of the men could be called from the fields to serve from the various towns like Gracias.<sup>7</sup>

Among the leaders of the provincial militiamen who went out from Gracias to participate in the campaign to recapture Omoa from the British, was the son of Juan Manuel Milla, Sergeant Major José Antonio Milla, grandfather of José Milla. After a brief campaign, the invaders were driven out. In 1782, José Antonio Milla again led the troops from Gracias, this time some 500 strong, to take part in a second victory over the British forces at Roatán, and the war came to an end with a treaty signed in 1783.<sup>8</sup> For his valor in these campaigns, Milla was promoted

from his staff duties as sergeant major to a command post with the rank of colonel of militia.

Milla had probably been encharged with fairly important staff duties like the supervision of discipline, training of the troops, and other administrative functions as well. With regard to the social standing of the Milla family, it is significant to note that the Spanish colonial practice was to commission the nobility and the distinguished creole families, an appeal to the self-interest of the upper strata of society. Inasmuch as José Antonio Milla was a commissioned officer of militia, for the sergeant major ranked second in command to the maestre de campo, or field officer, he came from an upper class gentry.<sup>9</sup> In the colonial years, from 1561 until 1781, four of the thirty-two governors of Honduras held the rank of either maestre de campo or sargento mayor,<sup>10</sup> indicating that such officers not infrequently held high provincial governmental posts in the relatively remote province of Honduras.

In 1790, for his aptitude and integrity, Milla was again promoted politically and socially by virtue of a second of the principal colonial reforms of Charles III since he assumed the Spanish throne in 1759. Milla had already achieved high social position because of his military rank, and now he was named subdelegado, or subdelegate, of the partido (district) of Gracias á Dios by the governor-intendent of Comayagua, a post in which he rendered important service. Milla was named to this new position as the leading administrator of his area in the same year that the intendente system went into general operation in America.<sup>11</sup>

Colonel Milla married Feliciano Arriaga, also of an old Spanish

family, and one of their several children was José Justo Milla, born in Gracias á Dios in 1794. This generation to which José Justo belonged was the third generation of his family to be born in that city, but he was the first to leave Gracias á Dios to seek a career outside. His father sent him to Guatemala City to study, and José Justo was pursuing a military career like his father's when the latter died in 1818.

The sending of their son for training in the capital city of the Kingdom probably reflected the social and economic prominence enjoyed by the Milla family as a direct result of the fame gained by José Antonio Milla in the militia battles against England from 1779 until 1782. Also, the lure of the capital must have been strong for the provincial families, and the proximity of Gracias á Dios and its trade relation with Antigua and the new capital after 1776 probably shared in their decision to send him to school there. The principal military life was centered in Guatemala,<sup>12</sup> and a military career offered continuing prominence and probably high office for their son.

When independence was proclaimed on September 15, 1821, José Justo Milla held the rank of sergeant major of cavalry, being a commissioned militiaman like his father. This is another indication of the family social position, for the son of Colonel José Antonio Milla attained high officer standing in the colonial forces while still in his mid-twenties. While a resident of Guatemala in these years, José Justo Milla married Mercedes Vidaurre, a daughter of one of the distinguished families of the capital, and on August 4, 1822, their only son, José Milla y Vidaurre, was born in Guatemala City, the first Milla in four generations to be born



and to reside outside the provincial Honduran town of Gracias á Dios.

#### A Sketch of His Childhood

The independence of Central America had been received with great acclaim and hope for the prosperous future of republican government on the Isthmus, but a deep-seated schism between the liberal and the conservative factions of the various former provinces immediately led to internal strife on the local, provincial, and state levels. The dissension frequently led to the division of families, with relatives fighting on opposing factions,<sup>13</sup> and the resultant chaos was disastrous to the newly independent peoples. Although they had achieved political emancipation, the colonial tradition in all forms of activity weighed heavily on them:

The ways of government, the practices, the customs, the beliefs and the education of three centuries, made completely impracticable the final triumph of the Independence Revolution. This also happened in the other Latin American states. In thought and in deed, the colonial spirit has been maintained. From this comes the point of departure of the frequent and disastrous revolutions that cover our annals; from this point comes the root of our political throes.<sup>14</sup>

Caught up in this civil strife, Sergeant Major Milla first attached himself to the troops of the former province of Tegucigalpa in Honduras, pledging himself to support them in their allegiance to Guatemala. In 1822, however, when it became clear that all Central America except El Salvador was going to annex itself to Mexico, Milla asked to return to Guatemala in March. From 1822 until 1829, José Justo Milla came to serve the Conservative, or Servile, Party in the constant internal strife in Central America. In those years, Agustín Iturbide's dream of empire collapsed in 1823, and, by 1824, a federal government



had been created with the name of the United Provinces of Central America. However, jealousy of one state for another caused the local wars to continue.

During these first years of his life, José Milla must have seen very little of his father. In February, 1823, José Justo Milla accompanied an expeditionary force to subject El Salvador to the Mexican empire of Iturbide, and, in January, 1824, he was named federal intendent of the United Provinces and commissioned to put down a revolt in León, Nicaragua. By that year, he held the commission of lieutenant-colonel, having advanced from sergeant major as his father had done. In September of the same year, he was elected vice-chief of the State of Honduras, assisting Dionisio de Herrera, and, although he was in Guatemala at the time, he wrote his acceptance and thanks to the constituent assembly of Honduras in the following month. Milla resigned as vice-chief in January, 1826.<sup>15</sup>

Lieutenant-Colonel Milla's lot was now cast with the Conservatives under Arce, and he led federal troops against his own native land of Honduras under the pretext of putting down political revolt there under the Herrera government he had served as vice-president only a short time before. He campaigned with success in Honduras from May to October, 1827, and in September he turned south to oppose the Liberal leader, Francisco Morazán, who was advancing to liberate Honduras. Morazán defeated Milla on November 11, 1827, at the decisive battle of Trinidad,<sup>16</sup> thus freeing Honduras of federal control at that time. Morazán then became president of the Representative Council of the reorganized State of Honduras.

Morazán led the armies of Honduras and Salvador in an invasion

of Guatemala City on April 13, 1829, the result of which was for José Justo Milla imprisonment and a sentence as traitor to his country of Honduras on July 20 of that year. On August 22, a second decree sent him and the other leaders of the federal armies into perpetual banishment from Honduras.<sup>17</sup> Milla was taken with other political prisoners to the port of Acajutla on the Pacific Ocean, where they embarked on August 29, 1829, for Panama. A shortage of space, food, and water led to a general state of hard feelings and indecision on the brigantine "General Hidalgo," and those passengers who wanted to go to Mexico, rather than to Panama, won out. Some forty days later, the brigantine reached Acapulco, Mexico, and Milla managed to stay on in Mexico until his death.<sup>15</sup>

In summing up the life of José Justo Milla, his biographer felt that Milla had been one of the outstanding military chieftains which Honduras inherited from the colonial period, but he saw no really worthwhile result of Milla's military actions. Ironically enough, Milla was praised for being the father of a child with whom he apparently spent little time and finally abandoned to the care of relatives; for it was said of him that "he had one shining glory nonetheless, which no one can fail to recognize: that of having been the father of the immortal writer don José Milla y Vidaurre."<sup>18</sup>

August 4, 1829, must have been a pretty dismal birthday for seven-year-old José Milla, living as a virtual orphan under the care of his mother's family, for only a year earlier, in 1828, when he was beginning to grasp the concepts of an adult world, his mother had died.<sup>19</sup> Now, his father was proscribed in disgrace from his native Honduras.

The staunchest supporter of José Milla was later to write what seems to be an apology for his later conservative career by laying the blame for that choice of political action to this early loss of parental guidance:

Milla lost his parents when he was still a child; thus he had to undertake the painful path of life in orphanhood. He could not enjoy the sweetness of maternal kisses, nor receive the affectionate paternal guidance which lends strength of characters, tender feelings to the heart and sweet memories and pleasant consolation to the spirit, needed when we reach that mature age in which the flowers of youth are stripped of their leaves and are only covered by the thorns of the rawer areas of human existence.<sup>20</sup>

This is interesting because Central American writers, particularly the self-styled liberals, always feel uneasy when confronted with the need to reconcile the good in his literature with what they hold to be the evil of his political career with the Conservative Party in later days.

José Milla y Vidaurre was, for all purposes, an orphan at the age of seven years then, and his mother's family, the Vidaurrees, took up the responsibility for his education and care. His birthplace had been the capital, Guatemala City, in the first year of Independence from Spain, and he continued to reside there until his death, the first of the Millas to reside in Guatemala. Only the rapid-moving events of the final years of the Spanish rule in Central America, coupled with the upheaval of the independence movement, had brought the Millas of Honduras into a position to locate his father in Guatemala and thereby give to Guatemala, and not to Honduras, the genius that was to be derived from the pen of José Milla.

#### The Formative Years

Most accounts of his early life stress the fact that he had the paternal guidance of a celebrated leader of the independence, a courageous,

learned, and polished priest named José María Castilla, Rector of the Jesuit Colegio Seminario Tridentino, where Milla received his preparatory instruction for a university career. During his days in that school he had already formed an affinity for literature. Among some lines of verse he once wrote a friend--the stanzas quoted at the beginning of this chapter--he said: "Each of us in good time, fulfills his destiny: / yours a golden sither, and mine a pen of steel. /"<sup>21</sup> His early orientation toward the field of letters was already apparent in the poetry he wrote, and his language and manner of self-expression were indicative of the great capacity for literary expression which was to mark his later life and work.

From 1831 until 1838, the early years of Milla's life, education flourished in Guatemala under the liberal regime, and favorable laws sought to develop that field. Under that regime, that of Dr. Mariano Gálvez, the famous Academia de Estudios de Guatemala (Academy of Studies of Guatemala) was inaugurated on September 16, 1832. This Academy included what had formerly been the University of San Carlos, and it lasted until March 6, 1840, when it ceased to function by a conservative decree.<sup>22</sup> Milla was ten years old when the Academy was opened, and he must have studied under the Liberal legislation governing the Academy and all other public instruction.

Public instruction comprised the primary, secondary, and advanced fields under the law. Primary teaching was given in the elements of reading, writing, arithmetic, religion and ethics, and political catechism on civil rights and obligations, to which were to be added language

instruction, geometry, geography, history, and drawing. Secondary learning continued with Castilian grammar, Latin, geography, chronology, history, rhetoric, belles lettres, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, logic, metaphysics, physics, ethics, natural law, public and constitutional law, political economy, and statistics. Advanced training in religion, medicine, and law was offered, with each of the three professional courses further subdivided to include three fields for study. Theology included ethical dogma, scripture, and the foundations of religion; medicine had chairs of anatomy, surgery, and medicine; jurisprudence included canon law, civil law, and forensic (rhetorical) practice. This curricula which was to be followed by the students of Milla's time was modern and progressive by the standards of that age, and it afforded real stimulus to the youth then being educated. The stirring times, talent, and application of the students combined to awaken a love for the sciences and for letters,<sup>23</sup> and sharing in this academic activity was the Tridentine Seminary School where all kinds of books and ideas circulated freely.<sup>24</sup>

In August, 1841, young Lorenzo Montúfar completed his two-year bachelor's course in Philosophy at the Tridentine school and prepared to enter upon the study of law at the recently restored University of San Carlos.<sup>25</sup> Since 1838, Rafael Carrera, the military leader, had been the dominant political force in Guatemala, carrying the Conservative Party into power with his military might after that year, when Guatemala separated from the United Provinces. The University was under the absolute control of the aristocrats and the clergy, and control was the



watchword with liberty considered an abuse. The defunct Academy was spoken of with horror, and a Capuchin monk told Montúfar when he entered to study Civil Law that "your studies have come at a very good time for you; all of the crazy ideas of Gálvez have already ended, and now the men who should be in command are in command."<sup>26</sup>

The young law student, who lamented the fact that he had not been able to attend the Academy before it was closed by the Conservatives, found the University to be a "caricature," a travesty of the same old colonial organization of curriculum, class books, and thinking, although he did feel that most of the professors were quite capable. Still, in his field of interest, he pointed out that there were no chairs of Political Economy, Public Law, International Law, Legislative Science, Oratory, Administrative Law, or Legal Medicine. The serviles did not find it convenient to permit the youth all that advanced and specialized knowledge.

Montúfar recalled that José Milla was a classmate during these schooldays, although Milla appeared to have been behind Montúfar in class standing because the latter was in the University in May, 1844, when Milla was still in the Tridentine Seminary preparatory course.<sup>27</sup> Montúfar considered the university curricula and textbooks to be a weapon wielded by the Conservative party to suppress fresh and provocative thinking in the young students of the epoch. This was demonstrated in his remark about the Spanish civil law course whose text by the Guatemalan, Dr. José María Alvarez (1777-1820) was "written under the Spanish monarchical regime."<sup>28</sup> He went on to list other texts of the same general nature by foreign scholars like the Swiss jurisconsult, Jean Jacques Burlamaqui (1694-1748)



in natural law, and the German jurist, Johann Gottlieb Heineccius (1681-1741) in Roman law, and it was true that these works bore the stamp of the colonial period, not of the contemporary one.<sup>29</sup>

However, the widespread use and translation given these studies, the evident quality and the broad concepts of the authorities seem rather to be indicative of good standards in the university as far as textbooks were concerned. With little more than a preparatory education, José Milla later demonstrated a broad outlook and a sound approach to universal events, to literature, and to the writing of history. The credit for at least part of his ability, that of initial formation of ideas and habits of study, surely lay with these teaching materials from which he studied.

Of the several Guatemalan professors at the Tridentine school and the university, Alejandro Marure was one for whom Milla performed capably. Marure held the chair of natural law, but he was actually a historian whose works are noted for their precision, accuracy, and methodical organization. In his examination in natural law, Pepe Milla spoke a great deal and in very correct literary style, for which all concerned were very pleased. At the same time, he performed poorly in Roman law, and he considered the reading of Alvarez, Heineccius, and Burlamaqui a calamity. Here again, his early orientation toward literature was apparent, and he was interested in history as well.

The French romantic writers were the vogue of the day, particularly Eugene Sue (1804-1857) and Victor Hugo (1802-1885). It was impossible to attend any social gathering of persons even moderately well informed without the tertulia turning to a discussion of the works

of notable contemporary Frenchmen. Literature was Milla's strong point as a student, and he read every novel and all the poetry, good or bad, which reached the shelves of the Tridentine School. At the same time, since he looked upon his law texts as a great burden, he was seldom prepared in his law studies. His flare for literature and his progress in literary studies came to be known outside the school so that he received visitors from among the distinguished writers of Guatemala City. These visits served to strengthen his inclination toward literature and took him further from law. When he should have been spending his time familiarizing himself with the subject matter of the law books, he passed hours in discussion with his friends of the verses of José Zorrilla y Morán (1817-1893), the articles and stories of Mariano José de Larra (1807-1837), the poetry of Alfonso de Lamartine (1790-1869), and the works of Victor Hugo (1802-1885).<sup>30</sup>

Among the most prominent friends of his literary circle were José Batres y Montúfar (1809-1844) and Juan Diéguez Olaverri (1813-1866), both contemporary poets of renown in Guatemala. The former, Pepe Batres, was the dominant literary figure of the country in the two decades from 1823 until 1843. The poet José María Urioste, Dionisio Alcalá Galiano--son of the Spanish orator Antonio Alcalá Galiano--, and María Josefa García Granados, a woman well-versed in literary themes, also formed part of the group. In spite of the servile ideology of his father, José Milla, in talks with the group, showed a remarkable attachment to the cause of Francisco Morazán, the man who had defeated José Justo Milla and caused his perpetual banishment from Honduras.

In order to evaluate the significance of Milla and his relation to this small literary group during the formative and most impressionable years of his life, it is necessary only to realize that the names of José Batres, Juan Diéguez, María Josefa García Granados, and José Milla later formed a large segment of the Guatemalan, and, for that matter, Central American section of the first monumental and authoritative literary history of the nineteenth century, Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's four-volume Antología de poetas hispano-americanos (Madrid, 1893).<sup>31</sup> Since that first broad study of Central American literary production, the histories and anthologies which followed that pioneer Antología by Menéndez y Pelayo have gradually dropped all but the names of Batres and Milla, but the fact remains that his literary group remained in prominence for most of a century as the best talent of the Isthmus.<sup>32</sup> From this, the conclusion follows that Milla received his initial stimulus to letters from some of the finest literary minds developed in both the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries in Central America.

That the spirit of this group of poets and Liberals profoundly influenced José Milla's thinking in his schooldays was evident in a poem he composed at that time. Milla was still in the Tridentine Seminary when General Francisco Malespín invaded Guatemala to retaliate for the Guatemalan conservative government under President Mariano Rivera Paz attempting to replace him as President of Salvador by sending an army into Salvador under Manuel José Arce. By May, 1844, Malespín had penetrated to Jutiapa in eastern Guatemala,<sup>33</sup> and Guatemala had converted the University of San Carlos into a student barracks as was the custom

under the threat of national invasion.<sup>34</sup>

After the University was mustered into a military headquarters, Milla and Montúfar were accustomed to getting together to discuss the events of the day. Montúfar, as a university student, was required to give military duty, but Milla was free to come and go at will with the preparatory students of the Tridentine school. Montúfar recalled that he took every opportunity to visit Milla at the latter's school to debate the causes of the war, which they both considered to be a farce. Their complaints centered on what was a general description of Central American politics at the time, the intrigue and constant military forays between the states and the local military factions.

Lieutenant General Rafael Carrera represented the strongest power in Central America, and the aristocratic group behind President Rivera Paz knew this kept them in office. They also feared that Carrera could not be controlled, and they feared Malespín for that same reason, although they had placed him in power in Salvador. An aristocratic leader, Manuel Francisco Pavón, and a titular bishop, the Marquis Juan José de Aycinena, both felt that they had better control over Arce, so they had sent him to replace Malespín. The chaotic nature of the times with expensive military campaigns supported out of public funds was unbearable to the Liberals. The treasury was too empty to pay the clerks of the national assembly, and, yet, the churches had ample funds from the tithe tax, as did Carrera for his troops.

Young Liberals were asking their leaders if the independence had been gained only to throw themselves to the "wolves," to Rafael and Sotero Carrera, his brother, and to Brigadier Gerónimo Paiz--the military tri-

unvirate of the time. José Francisco Barrundia, the aging leader of the Liberals responded:

The Spanish dependency was a perpetual regime which did not permit the enlightenment of the people. Our present situation is transitory. A savage regime, in the nineteenth century, cannot be perpetual in independent America. Light reaches us from the North and from the South; only the center is in shadows, and that wretched night cannot remain eternal.<sup>35</sup>

Liberal hope lay in the might of Malespín, whose invading army had been encamped in Jutiapa since May 20, 1844. President Francisco Ferrer of Honduras had put down a local insurrection in March in Texiguat, south of Tegucigalpa, and with his forces he sought allegiance with Malespín.<sup>36</sup> Here lay hope that powerful military forces could oppose and destroy Carrera, but such hope was smothered when Malespín decided that the time for upsetting Carrera was not ripe and retired back to Salvador in June.

José Milla, with all the vigor and impetuosity of a twenty-one-year-old imbued with liberal ideology, was incensed at these maneuvers. By this time, he had fed on the liberal educational ideas of the Gálvez regime, on the spirit and literary content of the French romanticists, on the heated division of public opinion as between the Liberal cause of Morasán and the Conservative leadership of Rafael Carrera, and on the spirited opposition to Carrera, both among his classmates and his literary circle outside the classrooms. He was swept up in the rebellious spirit of his time and social group. In the very midst of these events, he penned a poem dated May 24, 1844, which never ceased to be thrown up to him in later days when he turned to serve with increasingly high office the very man against whom his youthful indignation was directed, Rafael



Carrera. Since this poem is so often cited in fragmentary selections, it would seem worthwhile to reproduce it here in its entirety so that the very ardent, emphatic, and anti-Conservative viewpoint can be clearly noted.<sup>37</sup>

How Pepe Milla must have thought back in later years to his poem to Carrera, with the following point of view:

"A Patriotic Hymn in Praise of His Excellency, Lieutenant General R. Carrera, Chief of the Army, on the Occasion of the Salvadoran Expedition."

Quia vulvis es. et in vulverem revertis.  
For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Son of misery and of nothing,  
Tyrannical little oppressor of an inert people,  
Cowardly fox who boldly assaults  
A quietly sleeping henhouse.

General, dictator, hero, caudillo;  
Archangel, what do they call you!  
Against your maneuvering, you snarled up knave,  
The people cry out for vengeance now.

Despite that retinue of villains,  
Worthy honor guard for the likes of you,  
They will break through in desperation  
To break your crown across your head.

In pursuit of the enemy you are late,  
Lieutenant General, since at last your fatal hour  
Has sounded and may you tremble cowardly,  
Among your soldier's tatters.

Your memory execrated and damned,  
Also execrated will be your deeds,  
And, if one must speak of you, history will say  
That you knew not even how to live like a despot.

Wolves, Paiz, Carrera, veterans  
Of crime and terror of banners,  
Vile farce and burlesque of tyrants,  
Parodies of a cartridge, with epaulets.



What are you doing there? hurling  
The clarion call of war from Jutiapa;  
Imprudent, flee our vengeance  
Into the entrails of the earth.

Aycinena, Pavón, out with you gentlemen,  
Out with your rancid servility.  
Would you conservatives dream perhaps,  
Or show us a sneer of Toryism?

Honorable Marquis, no more Britain,  
No more status quo not tyranny:  
Why what an idea, Excellency . . . don't be deceived.  
Without the status quo, by Jove, what would you do?

What to do without indemnities?  
What about the fat and constant pay?  
How to charge without it, millions  
For losses, damages, and high posts?

Out with the gang, my Guatemala  
Be free at last of the obstacles to knowledge,  
Of those exceeding polite and overstuffed,  
Profound statesmen of quality.

The tigers of Texiguat have pounced,  
May your coward's heart tremble.  
And, ay! your foxes, if they catch them  
With their mean greyhounds from León!

Then will you bury today's proud crown:  
To dust you will return, from whence you sprang;  
And, then, generous Guatemala  
Will forgive your evil acts.

And, live on, she will say, live on  
Oh most vile! General, marshals, brigadiers,  
Live on puny parody of Achilles  
Operating a loom among women.

You will no longer stain noble blades,  
Defiled with the blood of pigs,  
Shining and most valiant warriors  
Live on, then, for your life is very dear.

Guatemala, May 24, 1844

J. D. M.

José Milla read the composition to other students besides his classmate Montúfar, and news of his poem reached the Liberal leader, Barrundia, who visited Milla in the Tridentine School and asked to read it. He was enthusiastic, as might be expected from the brash content of the work, and Barrundia requested a copy, which Montúfar said Milla did not dare refuse that great man. Barrundia kept it hidden for the time being, protecting the young student from harm.<sup>38</sup>

It was signed "J. D. M.," José Domingo Milla, which was his usual signature as a schoolboy, and this initialing of his writings was to become a characteristic of Milla, later to be supplemented by the use of an anagram for a pseudonym. The poetic outburst was primarily of historical interest rather than of literary quality, although it was much better done in the original Spanish, to which the reader is referred. It was a very succinct and complete summary of political events and passions of the day, and Milla possessed the ability to describe accurately what he saw, a fundamental quality in a writer of history.

Indignation, youthful vigor and impetuosity, clear and effective communication of his ideas, and a witty flare for the use of words could all be noted in the subject matter of the fifteen stanzas. This was later printed in newspaper form, so it may have been his first published work. The influence of the liberal atmosphere of which he formed part is especially marked. With this first noteworthy literary effort, he can be said to have achieved recognition of the potential to be found in his pen.

In July, 1844, less than two months after Milla wrote his stirring poem against the chaos and excesses of the military upheavals in Central

America, the trio of Milla, José Batres y Montúfar, and Juan Diéguez suffered a tragic loss with the untimely death of Batres at the age of thirty-five. Urioste and Galiano joined Milla and Diéguez in a real period of mourning, and then it was Milla, out of all the friends of Batres, who took it upon himself to compile and publish Batres' poetical compositions and give them to the public.<sup>39</sup> Apparently, he financed the publication with funds from the Batres family.<sup>40</sup>

Some of these poems had been printed in sources which were widely scattered and generally inaccessible to more than a few readers,<sup>41</sup> and this prompt action by Milla is usually hailed as his first real literary contribution to his country. His contribution lay not so much in editing ability as it did in the fact that by prompt action he saved Batres' works from historical oblivion.<sup>42</sup> It is to his credit that Milla, at the age of twenty-three, sensed the great value of the poetry of his friend Batres, and, unquestionably, recognition is due him for having the initiative and the foresight to offer this poet's work to posterity in the form of a modest, but invaluable, tome.

In his initial edition of the Poesías ("Poems") of José Batres y Montúfar, Pepe Milla included only eight footnotes, some taken from the manuscript of El Relox ("The Clock") and others which he himself added to explain Batres' text. While these notes at times left something to be desired in editorial ability, the fact remains that this first edition of Batres' poetry, from which nine following editions were printed in France, Spain, Ecuador, and Guatemala in the years down to 1924, remained "the most faithful and correct that until this date have come forth. In

the rest, the text of 1845 has been reproduced with serious errors and omissions which at times disfigure the thinking of the poet."<sup>43</sup> The 1924 edition of the "Poems" was reprinted in Guatemala in 1940, and the author simply reproduced his "Introduction" with the same statement that Milla's work had been the most accurate down to that of his own edition, showing that Milla's work as editor had been sound.

The eight footnotes of Milla's first edition were not notable for their historical accuracy. One case in point was the following, when Batres penned a certain stanza very nearly along the lines of the poem written by Milla to Carrera. Batres wrote in the eight-line stanzas of the royal octave:

And so the government dreams on  
With the bull, the bishop, and the fuero:  
While the enemy sings in Tapachula  
And in the Highlands resounds the hearse chant.  
Oh, fatherland! Dear native land, let pass  
If your tears I do not cover with my weeping;  
And if I laugh at any mortal thing,  
'Tis that I may not weep.<sup>44</sup>

The constant meddling in civil affairs by the Church was bemoaned, as was the military threat presented by the occupation of the border town of Tapachula by the "enemy," General Antonio López de Santa Ana, President of Mexico, in 1842. The "hearse chant" echoing in the highlands clearly referred to the continued indignation against excesses committed in Quetzaltenango by Carrera's troops in 1841, when that city was sacked and many of its citizens killed. But, Milla avoided the obvious allusions to these problems, choosing rather to state as follows: "It has not been possible at this point to decipher the stanza of the original, which the author left uncorrected."<sup>45</sup>

Milla adopted a new approach to politics at this point, editing the poetry in such a manner as to avoid conflict with Carrera. This seems to have been one of the first recorded steps in the turning point of the young man's political orientation, since he had only a short time before expressed not only adverse thoughts respecting the dictator, but they were even his own thoughts with regard to Rafael Carrera and what he represented. In editing the "Poems" of Batres, Milla apparently preferred to avoid clearly stating an antagonistic viewpoint toward Carrera, although it was a view actually expressed by Batres and not Milla. In 1924, Adrián Recinos, working with the original manuscript, had no trouble in reading this particular stanza of the poem.<sup>46</sup>

Also worthy of brief mention is another trait which appeared here and which came to mark Milla's own writing and editing in later years. He was prone to moralize in his novels and sketches of customs, undoubtedly acquiring at least part of that characteristic from his close association with Father Castilla in his youth. In a passage from Batres' composition entitled Las Falsas Apariencias ("False Appearances"), there appeared the following stanza describing a Boccaccio-like encounter between a husband and his wife's paramour:

The husband at last spoke up,  
Addressing himself furiously to the lover:  
--What are you doing in my bed, sir?  
And, the latter turned his stupid face  
(Because he was an animal, a bore)  
To the lady who was there behind,  
With obvious embarrassment and doubt,  
As if to ask her for the answer.<sup>47</sup>

Milla, and the later editions following his lead, did not reproduce the passage faithfully from the original manuscript. The husband



asked, "What are you doing in my bed, Sir?" However, Milla's first edition said, "What are you doing in my house, Sir?" He merely substituted the word casa, or house, for cama, bed, without upsetting the syllabication.

Still a third interesting inaccuracy occurred in the first edition of Batres' "Poems." This time Milla erred in his statement of historical fact. In an explanatory note added to the poem Al Volcan de Agua ("To Agua Volcano"), Milla attempted to elaborate on the origin of the name of that volcanic cone at the base of which is located Antigua, Guatemala. He said: "Thus called vulgarly because the waters which collected in its crater broke, causing the flooding of the original city of Guatemala in 1542."<sup>48</sup> Recinos shows that the original city of Guatemala was founded at Almolonga on November 22, 1527, by Jorge de Alvarado, and that, furthermore, it was destroyed on September 10, 1541, probably due not to the rupture of the cone of the volcano but rather to a simple flooding process after days of constant rain. However, Recinos might have added that Milla did not repeat his error in his two-volume history published in 1879,<sup>49</sup> after his attraction to historical writings had led him to some nine sources which described that now famous destruction of Antigua in the year 1541.

Milla's knowledge of history, acquired from a pursuit of historical interests throughout his entire adult life, stemmed from just such early attraction to his country's past as that reflected above. This is the interesting fact of Milla's life, rather than the equally true observation that in his first literary chore he may have erred in his information. One of the biographers of José Batres tells that Batres came to



know ancient and modern history very well, and that he had examined with great eagerness the chronicles, legends, and traditions of Central America, an interest which he succeeded in transmitting to his friend Milla. Batres himself mentioned his predilection for colonial history in his poem "The Clock," saying:

To the chronicles I am attracted,  
To those of Guatemala most of all,  
And I have scanned a number of them  
From title page to the very end.  
Not only Juarros do I read with pleasure,  
But in their way I find delight  
With Ximénez, Vázquez, Remesal, Castillo  
Fuentes, and some others when I attempt them.<sup>50</sup>

In this task as editor of Batres' poetry, Milla compiled this poem along with the others, and he must have been impressed with such an expression by Batres of his historical interests, as well as with the recollection of their mutual pleasure with the historical materials they had shared in reading. The Compendio de la historia de la ciudad de Guatemala, a two-volume work published in Guatemala from 1809 to 1816, was the most popular of the histories of colonial days and the one most read by Batres, as he said above in writing of Domingo Juarros, the author. The other authors named in the stanza--the friars Francisco Antonio de Fuentes y Guzmán, Francisco Ximénez, Francisco Vázquez, and Antonio Remesal, and famed soldier-historian Bernal Díaz del Castillo--wrote equally basic works for the study of the colonial era and were later to form part of the principal sources for Milla's own Historia de la América Central ("History of Central America").<sup>51</sup> A liking for history was another of the important tendencies acquired early by Milla and nurtured by his association with José Batres y Montúfar.

The very fact that José Milla took upon himself the compiling of the verses of his companion is probably the most eloquent testimony of their friendship in existence, for there is little direct written evidence remaining to show that close relationship except in the first edition of the "Poems." Batres wrote nothing of Milla in those Batres letters which have been preserved in printing. Milla said nothing of Batres later on in his own letters and other writings, and, in fact, one biographer of Batres deplored the fact that Milla, who knew Batres so well, left no written account of Batres beyond his brief words of introduction to the Batres edition of poetry in 1845.<sup>52</sup> Yet, practically everyone writing a biographical sketch on either man finds space to emphasize their friendship in glowing terms. The truth of the matter is that their friendship ought to be documented much further than it is at the present time.

At the urging of the Canon Doctor José María Castilla,<sup>53</sup> José Batres composed a rhetorical address on the meaning and significance of the Virgin Mary, a topic which Batres confessed to embrace "matters beyond human eloquence."<sup>54</sup> The author jokingly added at the end of his manuscript that he would never again get into such sacred and involved matters since he had not been born to vie with Solomon and St. Augustine. Batres always combined a puzzling dualism between a lonely sentimentalism and a lighthearted type of humor,<sup>55</sup> a similar dualism to be found in Milla later on. Batres asked Milla to read the speech at the fifteenth anniversary of the Tridentine School, and Milla did so. The fact that he asked Milla to read the paper in his stead showed that Batres esteemed Milla's friendship even in Milla's student days. Of the content, Batres

could only add in a note: "If the Virgin understands rhetoric, she will laugh a great deal at the rattling off of words which is directed at her annually by the wise men of the Tridentine. . . ." <sup>56</sup>

Another excellent indication of their friendship was to be found in the introduction of the poetical works of Batres which Milla compiled and edited. Milla composed a dedicatory statement of praise to Batres and added it to the volume of "Poems." It was in the form of a tryptych, or a poetic salute in three parts, entitled "Soldier, Artist, and Poet," and Milla dated it August 10, 1844. <sup>57</sup> In his grief, Milla lamented that his friend had to descend into the darkness and cold of the tomb through death by fever, when he might better have died heroically in battle during his years as a soldier.

Why, then, did not you also fall--  
Among the many valiant dead?  
Why do you not follow to the tomb  
Those whose fate was happier than yours? <sup>58</sup>

Batres' premature death was a great blow to Milla, his friends, and to contemporary society, as the passing of a talented poet should be.

It was not mere coincidence that Milla, in his later years, gravitated toward so many of the marked characteristics of his friend Batres--his humor, his love for romantic literature, his attraction to poetry as a means of expression, and his love for colonial themes, to mention a few. Batres was older than Milla in years, and Milla lived in close association with that poet and his literary circle. Batres has continued to be one of the literary greats of his country down to the present time, and Milla's emergence as a literary figure in his own right was undoubtedly due in part to this friendship and Milla's admiration for Batres. The very fact

that Milla edited and had published Batres "Poems" was important in lending early impetus to Milla to publish.

The printed volume of poetry finally came from the press, and the advertisement appeared in the "Official Gazette" for the issue of December 6, 1845: "The printing of the Poems of DON JOSE BATRES Y MONTUFAR has been finished, and it is for sale in the Paz Press at the price of six reals for each copy."<sup>59</sup> No mention was made of José Milla as compiler and editor of these poetical works.

By this time, José Milla y Vidaurre had definitely abandoned the classroom in order to follow the path of literary pursuits such as that represented by his editing of Batres' poetry. Pepe Milla's previous forthrightness in liberal political thoughts and discussion had also begun to dampen, as has already been noted in this chapter. Now, late in 1845, he was noticeably turning away from the liberal sentiments and the animated discussion of literary and political themes in the university halls to face the task of earning a living as he emerged from his schooldays into early manhood.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Rómulo M. Durón, José Justo Milla (Tegucigalpa, 1940), p. 29. The family origins of Milla are very briefly stated here in this biography of his father, written by a leading historian of Honduras.

<sup>2</sup>Federico Lunardi, La fundación de la ciudad de Gracias a Dios... (Tegucigalpa, 1946), p. 13. Today, Gracias a Dios is called simply Gracias, located in western Honduras near the Guatemalan frontier. Gracias, the town, is not to be confused with the Cape of Gracias a Dios on the eastern Honduran coast.

<sup>3</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., II, 165. Santiago will be called Antigua from this place forward in this study.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 164.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Gage, The English-American. A Survey of the West Indies, 1648 (London, 1928), p. 279.

<sup>6</sup>Lyle McAlister, "The reorganization of the army of New Spain, 1763-1767," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXIII (February, 1953), 1/-32. This article was very useful as a guide for an appraisal of the significance of military events in the Captaincy-General of Guatemala, for which no such organized study of regular army and militia activities as that of Professor McAlister's exists.

<sup>7</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., II, 725-728.

<sup>8</sup>Rómulo M. Durón, Bosquejo histórico de Honduras, 1502 a 1921 (San Pedro Sula, Honduras, 1927), pp. 90-92.

<sup>9</sup>Pedro Zamora Castellanos, Vida militar de Centro América (Guatemala, 1924), pp. 88-89. This is an excellent summary of colonial military organization in the period of 1767 to 1769 in Guatemala. A sergeant major apparently ranked as a lieutenant colonel at the time, with staff duties or occasional command. See also: Real Academia Española, Diccionario de la lengua española (17th ed.; Madrid, 1947), pp. 1345; McAlister, op. cit., pp. 9, 12, and 14.

<sup>10</sup>Antonio Batres Jáuregui, La América Central ante la historia (Guatemala, 1915-1920, 1949), II, 281-282.

<sup>11</sup>Haring, op. cit., p. 144, 145-146; Bancroft, op. cit., II, 716. This fundamental change in local government in the colonial administration



was aimed at centralizing control and thereby achieving greater efficiency; greater royal revenues to be applied toward colonial defense was the by-product hoped for. Each intendency was led by a gobernador intendente (governor-intendent), chosen in Spain, and it was divided into partidos (districts), each administered by an appointed subdelegate like Milla. The subdelegate served a term of five years. The intendency system in the Kingdom of Guatemala brought a reorganization of the provinces to fifteen in number, embracing four intendencies and thirty-nine subdelegations. In the intendency of Honduras, there were nine subdelegations, one of which was Gracias a Dios.

<sup>12</sup> Zamora Castellanos, op. cit., pp. 93-94, 186. In Guatemala City, the military organization at that time included a main headquarters regiment of regular troops called the Regimiento de Veteranos de Fijo, a somewhat disorganized cavalry corps called the Escuadrón de Dragones Milicianos, and an artillery corps. The forces stationed in the capital did not exceed five hundred men, so the bulk of the military strength still came from militia troops. Interestingly enough, though seldom if ever cited, the key officers of these three units, and the auditor de guerra, or legal counsel for the army, José Cecilio del Valle, were all proceres of the bloodless movement for independence.

<sup>13</sup> Lorenzo Montúfar y Rivera Maestre, Reseña histórica de Centro América (Guatemala, 1878-1887), I, 13.

<sup>14</sup> Ramón Rosa, Oro de Honduras. Antología (Tegucigalpa, 1948-1954), II, 46.

<sup>15</sup> Durón, Milla, pp. 32 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-87.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>19</sup> J. M. García Salas, R. Uriarte, and F. González Campo, Corona fúnebre dedicada a la grata memoria del insigne literato guatemalteco don José Milla (Salomé Jil) (Guatemala /1885/, p. 14. Durón, Milla, p. 88.

<sup>20</sup> Ramón Rosa, "Don José Milla y Vidaurre," Revista de la Universidad /de Honduras/, XI (March 15, 1921), 88.

<sup>21</sup> García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>22</sup> Marure, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

<sup>23</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, I, 310-311.

<sup>24</sup> Lorenzo Montúfar [y Rivera Maestre], Memorias autobiográficas (Guatemala, 1898), p. 23. This volume is the first part of a work which



was intended to be continued in other volumes. The second part of the "Memoirs" was never published, but remains in the hands of his family in Guatemala City. See Burgess, Barrios, xix.

25 Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 28-29. Lorenzo Montúfar (1823-1898), in his recollection of personal experiences at the Tridentine Seminary School and the University of San Carlos, fortunately left a description of those institutions, their professors, textbooks, and his classmates--among them José Milla. Montúfar's "Memoirs" were edited by his son, apparently without sufficient editing to clarify the chronology at many points. The text must be constantly checked against other sources to avoid confusion. The "Memoirs" are that part of the author's seven-volume "Historical Sketch of Central America," in which Montúfar actually took part, and these memoirs were posthumously printed by his son. While the memoirs are an excellent and colorful source for the social history of part of the nineteenth century, Montúfar is not the great "liberal" he has been held to be. Often, he is biased, bigoted, and illiberal to the extreme, omitting the important events or facts which do not support his own case. The question of Montúfar in nineteenth-century historiography has yet to be sufficiently studied.

26 Ibid., p. 31.

27 Montúfar, Reseña histórica, IV, 483-484.

28 Montúfar, Memorias, p. 32.

29 Ibid. For Alvarez, see David Vela, Literatura guatemalteca (Guatemala, 1943), II, 84; see also the U. S. Library of Congress listings of his Instituciones de derecho real de Castilla y de Indias (4 vols.; Guatemala, 1818-1820), printed in various editions in Guatemala, Mexico, Cuba, and Spain. Burlamaqui's Principes du droit naturel (Geneva, 1747) and Principes du droit politique (Geneva, 1751) were printed in many editions of textbooks in French, Spanish, and English in Europe and America, and these are listed in the Library of Congress catalogue; see also "Juan Jacobo Burlamaqui," Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana, IX ( /1931/ ), 1490, and "Jean Jacques Burlamaqui," Encyclopaedia Britannica, IV (1945), 422. Heineccius was perhaps the greatest of the authors from whose works Montúfar and Milla studied. He was an elegant writer and erudite philosopher, an influential professor and jurist, an expert in history and scientific methodology, and his works were translated into Spanish and used widely in Spanish universities in the nineteenth century. His well-known textbooks in Roman and German law were written from 1719 to 1741. "Juan Teófilo Heinecio," Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana, XXVII ( /1931/ ), 939; "Johann Gottlieb Heineccius," Encyclopedia of the social sciences, VII (1932), 316; Hans Fehr, "Johann Gottlieb Heineccius," Encyclopaedia Britannica, II (1945), 389.

30 Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 33 ff.

<sup>31</sup>Pp. clxxii-clxxxi, 325-361, and 371-384.

<sup>32</sup>John A. Crow, "Historiografía de la literatura iberoamericana," Revista iberoamericana, II (November, 1940), 471. Crow lists a number of major literary histories down to about 1938, a few of which were sampled to determine if Milla and his literary circle did remain in the histories and anthologies after their deaths. In Alfred Coester's Literary history of Spanish America (New York, 1916), pp. 446-447, Batres, Diéguez, and Milla were included. In succeeding years, these three remained in prominence and were listed in Luis Alberto Sánchez's Historia de la literatura americana (Santiago de Chile, 1937), pp. 244, 332, and 344. After 1938, the principal histories and anthologies continued to list Batres and Milla. Robert G. Mead, Jr., in his "A note on Spanish American literary historiography," Hispania, XXXV (1952), 419-421, and his "Historiografía reciente de la literatura hispanoamericana," La Nueva Democracia, XXXV (1955), pp. 14-22, pointed out certain general works cited hereinafter. Pedro Henríquez-Ureña, Literary currents in Hispanic America (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1949), pp. 109-110 and 250 listed Batres and Milla; Enrique Anderson Imbert, Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana (Mexico, 1954), pp. 112-113 and 163 listed them both too.

<sup>33</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 190-193.

<sup>34</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, p. 43.

<sup>35</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 9.

<sup>36</sup>Zamora Castellanos, op. cit., 230, 233-234.

<sup>37</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, IV, 484-486; Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 44-46. The better reproduction, given in the Reseña histórica, is used here.

<sup>38</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 46-47.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>40</sup>Sociedad de Historia e Geografía de Guatemala, Poesías de José Batres Montúfar. Homenaje de la Sociedad de geografía e historia de Guatemala, 1844-1944 (Guatemala, 1944), p. 31.

<sup>41</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, p. 49; Adrián Recinos (ed.), Poesías de José Batres Montúfar (Guatemala, 1940), p. 103, cites Batres' remark in his newspaper El café, which he edited in 1839 and which, typical of Central American newspapers and journals, reached only six numbers before it terminated. Batres published "Don Pablo" in that newspaper, saying in the dedicatory that "... I limited myself to copying a few ... witty sayings in a story that should not go beyond my own circle of friends, since the fact that a newspaper is published in Guatemala is the same as finding it in a private archive."

<sup>42</sup>Recinos, op. cit., xxv-xxvi.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., xxvi.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 165-166. The last two lines were based on Byron's "Don Juan," canto IV, IV.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. xxvii.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 93-94.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>49</sup>José Milla, Historia de la América Central (Guatemala, 1879-1882), I, 328-329.

<sup>50</sup>Recinos, op. cit., pp. 108-109.

<sup>51</sup>Milla, Historia, I, "Prólogo."

<sup>52</sup>José Arsuí, Pope Batres íntimo. Su familia, su correspondencia, sus papeles (Guatemala, 1940), p. 50.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 201-202.

<sup>55</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 178.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 170; Arsuí, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>57</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 170.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 182-183.

<sup>59</sup>Gaceta Oficial, p. 80.

## CHAPTER III

### MILLA ENTERS CONSERVATIVE POLITICS, 1844-1848

José Milla y Vidaurre, known first as a Liberal, later as a servile Conservative, and always as a writer . . .

Lorenzo Montúfar

### His Conversion to Conservatism, 1844-1846

José Milla was converted to the Conservative Party by the same aristocratic Manuel Francisco Pavón whom he had attacked so bitterly in his poem of the previous year. At that time, he had written, "Aycinena, Pavón, out with you, gentlemen, out with your rancid servility." It was said that this change of politics was motivated in part by his poverty, which was to become a constant problem in his life. Also, his uncle, Santiago Milla, brother of José Justo, was in a position to seek out an official location for him through the good offices of Pavón, a personal friend of his.<sup>1</sup>

With the decision to accept the Conservative cause, a new phase in his life began, and Milla was henceforth to rise to great importance in the public service of his country. For the following twenty-six years, he was closely identified with the emergence of the Republic of Guatemala, and he was destined to rise to national prominence in government, in literature, in teaching, and in the social order in general. Probably the greatest significance to be seen in this decision to change political camps was the fact that the Conservative Party managed to remain in office

for the following quarter of a century, and José Milla was therefore assured a position with the government which, as will be seen, afforded him a vehicle to fame as a writer, teacher, and national political figure.

At the same time, it is important to note that this change in political affiliation deprived the Liberal Party of one of its most promising and potentially most useful young members. This explains the chagrin of so many of the contemporary essayists who wrote of Milla, for they invariably prefaced the story of Milla's career after 1845 with the remark that this was an unmentionable political change which he made. One of the better examples of this disappointment was reflected in the writing of a young Honduran Liberal, Ramón Rosa, who said of Milla:

Having divorced himself from Jurisprudence, he appeared in the year 1846 as editor of "The Review," a newspaper of the "Economic Society of Friends of Guatemala," of whose Directive Board he was Secretary. Then Milla began to have a new point of view in matters of politics. The nature of this brief writing, and the character of this newspaper, hinder me from rendering a judgment on the evolution of his ideas.<sup>2</sup>

Rosa was a dedicated admirer of José Milla, but he felt it necessary to beg permission not to speak of this defection to conservatism. Of course, the point is that the impartial student of Milla must see that it was, in fact, a fortunate change for him personally, a fact borne out by his noteworthy achievements under Conservative rule in following years.

What were the political currents of Guatemala, and of all of Latin America, in this period? Since Milla's change was political, there is need to view the political scene to discover perhaps a motive for change from liberalism to conservatism. Ramón Rosa, who described Milla's



change of party, also succinctly described this period of Latin American history from the liberal viewpoint:

. . . but force, gentlemen, has in no age established anything, and it will never be able to leave something stable, to leave permanent institutions of right and of liberty.

In order to confirm my statements, I need not cast a glance at the Old World; I will cite examples from the Latin American Republics which have had the same vicissitudes that ours has had, that have some circumstances analogous to the present ones [1872], and that will doubtless share the same future. Santa Ana in Mexico, Rosas in Buenos Aires, Doctor Francia in Paraguay, Monagas in Venezuela, Melgarejo in Bolivia, and right here, Carrera in Guatemala and Medina in Honduras; what have they left that is permanent and honorable? Force was their way; did it form a public conscience? did it do away with the shadows of ignorance? did it develop the natural wealth and use it to the advantage of the people? did it leave morality in society, morality in the administration of the State? No, gentlemen, force has only left deep social vices and ruin justly lamented, and that proves to us the truth of the saying of the great tribune of Spanish democracy, Castelar: bayonets solve everything, except for those who fall before them.<sup>3</sup>

This was the crux of the political times. It was a question of liberty or despotism, of anarchy or strong-man stability, of civilization or barbarism; and, men lined up on one side or the other according to their choice of action. Rosa and Batres, Diéguez, and Montúfar too— chose the liberal side; Milla tended, like his father before him, to the conservative. The events of the middle decades of the nineteenth century were enacted, recorded, and have become a matter of history, but today the argument continues as to which technique will solve Latin America's political chaos: liberty or despotism? It cannot yet be said that Milla erred in his choice of stable, firm control under the Conservatives led by Rafael Carrera.

Carrera had virtually controlled the presidency of the country since April 13, 1839, and on December 14, 1844, he did actually assume

that office by decree when Mariano Rivera Paz resigned as president. His power lay in a triumvirate composed of himself as leader, his brother Sotero Carrera and Brigadier Gerónimo Paiz, the latter two holding the portfolios of treasury and war. Constitutional government was nonexistent. In 1845, a rather liberal constitution was sought, only to be rejected the following year by the aristocratic clique. Constituent assemblies followed one another, but aristocratic intrigues and an all-pervading fear of Carrera and his military might with the Indian troops held the government in a state of civil chaos and near paralysis.<sup>4</sup>

This was the leader José Milla chose to follow because Milla looked to military might as a means of securing social, economic and political stability for Guatemala. This was his answer to the problem of stability in government. His need for employment after leaving the university and the influence of his uncle with Pavón, the Minister of Foreign Relations, Government, and War, paved the way for his joining the conservative cause. However, this transition in politics was not as abrupt as has been intimated in essays on Milla in the past, but rather it was accomplished over a period of perhaps two years in the following manner.

In May, 1844, when Milla wrote his diatribe against conservatism, he was undoubtedly of a very liberal outlook as his poetry showed. However, after the death of José Batres in July of that year, Milla began to show signs of new-found caution, as evidenced in his editing technique with regard to Batres' obvious allusions to anti-Carrera and anti-Conservative events of the early 1840's. When Batres' "Poems"

appeared late in 1845, this state of caution characterized Milla's thinking over the year which elapsed between Batres' death and the first edition of the poetical works.

Shortly thereafter, on December 9, 1845, José Milla was named to a junior membership (asistente) in the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País ("Economic Society of Friends of the Land")--hereinafter called the Economic Society.<sup>5</sup> This Economic Society had been created in colonial Guatemala in 1794, and it had continued into the post-independence period, functioning sporadically for the purpose of scientifically stimulating agriculture, the arts, and commerce.<sup>6</sup> A glance at its leadership sufficed to establish the aristocratic bent of the organization, so here was a documented initial step in Milla's capitulation to conservative activities and points of view. By early March, 1846, Milla was himself a secretary in the leadership of the Economic Society, whose Director was the Canon Doctor José María Castilla,<sup>7</sup> Milla's benefactor in his school days. The speed of his transition to conservatism was gaining momentum, but it was not yet complete.

In June, 1846, Milla took still another step away from his past liberalism. The poet Juan Diéguez, who had been a mainstay in the liberal schoolboy circle of literary friends, found himself in serious trouble with the Carrera government. He was involved in a plot against Carrera in which one faction of Liberals decided to form a new party and by force of arms to obtain certain political concessions from the president. Their plot was discovered in advance, and, on June 26, during Carrera's attendance at the funeral services of Archbishop Ramón Casaus y Torres in the cathedral in Guatemala City, the armed plotters, who had

hoped to surprise Carrera during the ceremony, were quietly rounded up. Diéguez suffered imprisonment and subsequent exile into Mexico,<sup>8</sup> but his friend Milla remained loyal to the leader over whom the trouble arose. This was a parting of the political paths of Milla and Diéguez, and, with Batres dead, the triangle of Guatemala's three nineteenth-century literary lights was reduced to complete disbandment.

It was on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Central American Independence, September 15, 1846, that Milla took the final and irrevocable step into conservative politics, and he did so knowingly and willingly.<sup>9</sup> The Minister of Foreign Relations, Government, and War, Manuel Francisco Pavón, was described as a man of unquestioned talent, but not of great wisdom. He had traveled, he had read, he was familiar with newspaper writings, his manner was pleasant, and his social behavior had been polished in cultivated circles within and without Guatemala.<sup>10</sup> He set out to convert both Milla and the young liberal, Lorenzo Montúfar, to his cause, and, in Milla, he met with success.

Milla lacked any property or personal fortune, and his economic situation grew increasingly trying as he came to manhood. His uncle, Santiago Milla, had continued to speak with Pavón about an official post for his nephew. As the Fifteenth of September was approaching, Pavón wanted José Milla to deliver the customary independence address, and the young man accepted. His uncle did his best to bring about a speech that would be as gratifying as possible to the serviles. While the speech was being composed, Santiago Milla kept Pavón informed of the details of his nephew's composition. Then, Pavón wanted to hear it read, and, when

the author of the speech agreed, the two of them finished it together.<sup>11</sup>

The resultant address on Independence Day produced such a furor that even Carrera's minister refused to have it published with government funds,<sup>12</sup> and from that day in September, 1846, Milla was effectively and irrevocably enrolled in the aristocratic Servile party.<sup>13</sup> Some liberals were angered into commissioning one of their members to reply to the address, and since Carrera could not see any significance in the ensuing polemic his minister allowed the Liberals to attack Milla and the aristocrats. Liberal chagrin with Milla was summarized in the following statement: "It is regrettable that a person who belongs to the youth and to the people should plead the cause that succumbed in 1821."<sup>14</sup>

The crux of this disagreement is apparent. The anticipated "Independence" from Spanish colonial rule was still very much an unknown quantity at the end of the first quarter century of political independence. No liberal political movement worthy of the name had emerged to endure any definitive length of time, although Mariano Gálvez had managed to hold the presidency from 1831 until 1838. On the contrary, the very same aristocratic, conservative, religious-minded families who had provided undisputed leadership under the Spanish Crown now formed the membership of the controlling conservative, aristocratic, servile party. The Liberals attacked Milla and the aristocratic serviles for the speech, however, leaving Carrera out of the argument. Carrera was the handmaiden of the aristocrats, scarcely worthy of argument. He was despised, feared, hated, but the elite Liberals and Conservatives seldom honored him with personal opposition, as though personal contact with them were too good for the likes of him.



Both Liberals and Conservatives sought the establishment of Republican Guatemala, and a similar movement was under way in the other four states of the Isthmus after the dissolution of the United Provinces of Central America in 1838 and 1839. Milla, as late as 1855, wrote of this period after 1839 in Guatemala as "the period most productive of events and most interesting in the history of the country."<sup>15</sup> He referred, of course, to the rise of Carrera to political power from 1839 until his lifetime tenure of the presidency in 1854, an extremely interesting and fruitful period of history for José Milla as well.

For the Liberals, as represented by Lorenzo Montúfar, the period after 1839 was by no means enlightened, exciting, or productive. On the contrary, it was held to be disastrous to the cause of independence:

What events were those which in 1839 came to necessitate and to establish the fact of the schism of the homeland?

These events were the triumph of the aristocratic Servile party by means of the fiction of the poisoning of the waters of the fountains and the rivers; the entrance of Carrera into Guatemala at the head of the savage hordes on April 13, /1839; the re-establishment of all the antiquity which the House of Austria left us; and the decline of everything new which had been raised up at the cost of tremendous work since /1821.<sup>16</sup>

This Liberal spokesman elaborated further. What was the law and the legal basis for this fracture? It was that decreed April 17, 1839. Who decreed it? It was decreed by Mariano Rivera Paz, a citizen taken from his home on April 13 by Carrera at the direction of the aristocrats and located in the position of executive and then declared president.

The salient issue drawn by the political parties was that of which party was to govern and on what legal basis. Milla lined up with the aristocratic camp, and, when accused of supporting a monstrous government, he replied: "We are as we wish to be, as we ought to be, and

as we can be."<sup>17</sup> With that choice, he became a Conservative for life.

#### His Initial Occupation in Journalism, 1846-1848

In 1846, Guatemala's small population of 936,809<sup>18</sup> lived chiefly from staple crops of corn, beans, and cacao, reflecting a continuing colonial self-sufficiency at a subsistence level of existence.<sup>19</sup> In the decade after 1846, two dyestuffs, indigo and cochineal, provided some 94 percent of Guatemala's meager, one-crop export for foreign trade.<sup>20</sup> The economy had not progressed since colonial days, and the country remained tied to a subsistence-level standard of living domestically and to the role of supplier of raw materials to the textile factories of France and England abroad.<sup>21</sup> Coffee planting was encouraged, but was not then important.

The two major sources of domestic and foreign news at the time were the official government paper, the Gazette, and the Economic Society's weekly Revista ("Review"), both of which were edited by M. F. Pavón, the government minister. José Milla's livelihood for the next two years came from his position with the Economic Society as editor with Pavón of the Review, published in seventy-two numbers from December 3, 1846, until May 26, 1848.<sup>22</sup> That was his first position of public importance for the compiling of Batres' poetry and Milla's earlier poem had been done on his personal initiative. Milla, who had no profession after dropping out of his law course, found recourse in that government-sponsored post.

Pavón was business chairman and Milla secretary of the Society, and Montúfar told that Milla's position was a modest one. Pavón covered reams of paper with his jumbled thoughts, calling Milla to give them literary form. Montúfar said Pavón did the thinking and Milla "prettied it up,"<sup>23</sup> thereby focusing on the two editors the chagrin of the Liberals who

felt they had no voice in government or public information.

Actually, in these first two years of his public service, Milla began to assume some responsibility as a spokesman for the Conservatives. These were the modest beginnings of a career which was to lead to Milla's reputation as the "bard" of conservatism in the years down to 1871 and the final collapse of his party. A few examples from events of the years 1846 and 1847 served to illustrate Milla's activities.

In November 1846, he delivered the principal oration at the funeral rites of the Guatemalan artist, Francisco Cabrera (1780-1846), in the salon of drawing of the Economic Society.<sup>24</sup> Milla cited the praise given by Henry Dunn in his Guatemala, or, The Provinces of Central America, (New York, 1828). Dunn said of Cabrera that, as a self-trained miniature-painter, he could be compared with the best of Europe.<sup>25</sup> By citing Dunn, Milla showed his awareness of the then current sources of historical writings on Central America too.

He went on to state some interesting generalizations which reflected his thinking with regard to those who might choose the less remunerative pursuits like art or literature, and one feels the presence of his grief over the recent death of Batres in the following remarks:

The circumstances of our country have not permitted those endowed with ability to develop their talents as they should have done; hemmed in by narrow limits, surrounded by a few more or less accurate copies of the great masters, their efforts and labor have not gained favorable patronage. Why do you say to me, Gentlemen, among us where are the recompenses offered for the merit of the artists? Where are the galleries in which to preserve such works? What prizes, what awards have been assigned those who distinguish themselves? Almost all of our artists toil eagerly, struggle with infinite difficulty, and after a lifetime of want and scarcity die in misery and neglect. Perhaps we neither have proclaimed nor yet recognized that genius in society is a power, an aristocracy; the masses confuse the artist

with the artisan, and see nothing in the works of the former but a mechanical task. . . .<sup>26</sup>

Pondering these questions, Milla sought the answer to a more civilized society in the stability that could be gained through conservative leadership.

At the end of November, Milla participated in the establishment of an association within the University called the Sociedad Estudiaosa ("Scholarly Society"), founded in an effort to combat the same type of social ills mentioned in the funeral address on Cabrera. This society sought to make possible the presentation of certain courses which the University of San Carlos could not otherwise afford to present due to a scarcity of funds. In the election of officers, Milla became one of the two secretaries elected.<sup>27</sup> Again he showed that he was entering into positions of responsibility in Guatemalan society.

The first two chairs opened for lectures were Political Economy and Public Law, and classes were to be held bi-weekly. A solution of the needs of national economy were fundamental to republican Guatemala, and the lack of a basic law of the land was an explosive issue. This undoubtedly explains why these two lectureships were established. Pedro Molina, a Liberal leader, taught the economy, while a high-ranking Conservative, Juan José Aycinena, taught the legal course. It was a nice balance of ideas and information, reflecting a rather democratic political atmosphere for all the despotism of Carrera in the military arena. Milla was a student in these classes, along with Miguel García Granados, the Liberal who was to be one of the two military leaders who defeated Milla's party by revolution in 1871. But, due to poor attendance, the

classes were of short duration.<sup>28</sup>

In December 1847, he was re-elected to the secretaryship of the Economic Society, this time as First Secretary. His literary duties continued with the Review, and he continued with Pavón in the tactic of writing of those aristocratic matters and political events which goaded the Liberal Party to shouts of outrage for their own lack of publications as a means to refute conservative allegations. Typical of these writings were the editorials on Indian "civilization," which Milla and Pavón made clear was not civilization at all but simply drunkenness and brute excess.<sup>29</sup> Their solution was to impose a strong, centralized government, a condition the Liberal Party could not sanction at all.

Excellent, but at the time irritating to those who opposed the religious hierarchy, were descriptions of the dedication of the famous church of San Juan de Dios. Such articles as this, filled with details of the construction, cost, and contemporary social atmosphere in the capital city, have remained invaluable sources of social history.<sup>30</sup> In this sense, Milla and Pavón demonstrated a keen descriptive ability and a sense of the value of reporting such activity. One of José Milla's greatest capacities in the literary field was his descriptive ability, and it was a talent he possessed from the very beginning of his writing. Equally valuable records, for the same reasons, were the articles such as that on the completion of the social club called Las Variedades, later to be the scene of presidential banquets and other state gatherings. The rich details of the decoration and the significance of this building reveal good writing ability by Pavón and his young assistant.<sup>31</sup> But, this



was descriptive of aristocratic society and did not treat of political analysis and differences, so the opposition continued to lambast Milla and Pavón.

The ability to chronicle the historical events of his epoch was no mere coincidence with Pepe Milla. His historical sense was clearly apparent from his earliest days of adult life and activity, and he expressed his interest in history and the preserving of historical materials on innumerable occasions, even though he may not have consciously felt his interest was that of a historian at that time. His query expressed during the funeral oration for the artist, Cabrera, went to the heart of the lack of public interest in art galleries, museums, or archives, when he lamented of paintings, "Where are the galleries in which to preserve such works?" He later extended this idea to public archives for the preservation, not only of paintings of historical value, but of protecting books, newspapers, and similar materials not otherwise cared for by the nation.

In December 1847, Milla was elected to the office of síndico, a kind of trusteeship on the governing board of the city council of Guatemala City.<sup>32</sup> His first duty, as a committeeman on the Commission of Statistics with a don Rafael Arévalo, was a minor task of preparing a report on the state of the city schools of which no known record remains.<sup>33</sup> If any significance can be attached to this, it is that it shows how Milla was faced with another of the many problems facing the organisation of a republican Guatemala for which a solution was imperative, affording him a political education that was broad and that began

early in his public career.

Pertinent to his early historical orientation was another task arising, at his own suggestion, from his trusteeship on the city council. It was a clear statement of his sense of history and of the need to preserve historical materials for the colonial period of Central American history. The following news item from the Review was interesting in its entirety:

Economic Society.--In the latest sessions . . . at the motion of Mr. José Milla, it was agreed to request from the Municipality the portrait of Captain Pedro Alvarado, conqueror of Guatemala, whose painting was lost from the building in the year 1821, and recovered in 1840 by the municipal trustee, who at that time was José María Palomo, remaining up to the present date relegated to a very poor location; considering the aforementioned painting to be an interesting object for history and for the arts, the Society agreed to ask the municipal body for it in order to have it retouched and placed, as soon as possible, in a salon to be designated for such paintings. A commission was given to the said gentleman, on a motion he himself made, to try to form a collection of paintings of persons distinguished in the country for their talents, virtues, and public careers, so that there might be a number of paintings which it would be convenient for the Society to have.<sup>34</sup>

#### The Liberals Challenge Carrera's Power, 1848

In the years between late 1845 and early 1848, while José Milla was gradually assuming a modest position in numerous public associations and bodies, the political chaos and economic impoverishment of the nation continued. It was true that on March 21, 1847, President Rafael Carrera decreed the state of Guatemala to be a republic,<sup>35</sup> claiming correctly enough that in the eight years since the dissolution of the federal pact with the United Provinces it had been impossible to re-establish that pact. Carrera's real desire was to set up a clearly independent republic and to break effectively with the aspiration of Central American unionism

for once and for all. At the same time, Carrera's tenure of office and his political maneuvers such as declaring the republic were not at all secure. Any number of political problems lay dormant and, yet, ready to burst forth into full-fledged and dangerous issues which could challenge even the military might of Carrera.

Carrera hoped to keep the public quiet in order to forestall trouble, and Milla and Pavón were instruments in that tactic when they authored articles stressing a public tranquility, which did not exist in fact.<sup>36</sup> Uneasiness was generated over the lack of a constitution for the new republic. Another problem was the unrest among the Indian masses who finally rebelled against the ladinos, or nonindigenous peoples, who deprived them of their lands and took forced labor from them, too. These small, local uprisings began in May, 1847, and spread throughout that year, posing the threat of a serious revolt.<sup>37</sup> The determination to overthrow the dictator Carrera was a continuation of the same pressure for his downfall that had existed in May, 1844, when Milla, too, wrote against him. It is significant because it shows that Carrera's tenure of office generally was problematical and not as stable as has been generally assumed over the years after 1839. Had Carrera been deposed, Milla would surely have suffered the consequences for his editorial writing on Carrera's behalf, and Milla must have known that in these insecure years.

Throughout 1847, there was a scarcity of foodstuffs and a problem over a government whiskey monopoly which brought armed robbery and minor revolts that spread unchecked in the latter part of the year. An hacienda

belonging to the president was finally raided on October 15, and an accused man was decapitated. His name was José Lucío López, and his followers, lucíos, or sparks, flared into open revolt in the mountainous section north and east of the capital. Carrera himself had to put down the insurrection temporarily,<sup>38</sup> but the entire country to the east of Guatemala City was up in arms by the end of the year. The accusation of brutality against Carrera added yet another problem to his tenure of office.

The tangled events of the year of 1848 afforded the best illustration of the confusion and conflict of political currents in Guatemala for any of the years following the dissolution of the federation in Central America. In those nine years, no valid governmental process had developed, and, in fact, 1848 was a year of decision for Guatemala. Carrera entered the capital on the first day of the year, returning from a campaign against the insurgents in the countryside. From that day until his resignation on August 15, the Republic of Guatemala was the scene of an incredible play of passion and selfish political motivation, and the resultant interplay of liberty and despotism was typical of the political scene over most of Latin America in the middle years of the century.

Carrera was the key figure because through his seemingly invincible sword lay political power, and, yet, he was a simple, brutal leader, easily swayed by the glib aristocrats and clergy, and soundly hated for his brutality by the opposition Liberals. His leadership had been suffered by the people "by out and out deceit for over a decade;

but, finally, the people wearied of this."<sup>39</sup> In 1837, when the masses of people were urged to revolt against the Liberal government of Dr. Mariano Galvez by the Church and other political factions, the people acted on the promise of land, money, and official positions. They acted, too, because the clergymen told them the government was poisoning the water supplies, when actually the doctors sought to counteract an invasion of cholera from Mexico.

In succeeding years, the vast majority of the people continued in an humble status, and taxes and tithes were their lot. The clergymen benefited from the tithes. The merchants in charge of tax collection, by virtue of leasing the operation of the Hacienda, or Public Treasury, also got rich. These abuses were added to the food shortage and the initiation of the whiskey monopoly, the food shortage apparently due to monopolistic measures by the merchant class. The former comrades-at-arms of the Conservatives saw themselves working long hours for short pay. They were subjected to brutal treatment or sudden death by Carrera, or his chieftains, for real or imaginary crimes, and usually there was no due process of law. The wealth of the land was dissipated in expenditures for religion and for the well-paid troops of Carrera in his military campaigns. In the end, the revolts in the departments offered the intellectual leaders of the Liberal Party an entering wedge against Carrera and his conservative backers, and the pressure to oust Carrera from the executive post reached a peak in 1848.<sup>40</sup>

In that year, a number of steps were taken to stifle the insurrection, and in those measures and the hue and cry raised against them



lay the principal problems confronting the Conservatives: executions without due process of justice; every kind of outrage against individual rights; the free exercise of the press for the Review and the Gazette only; and, finally, the closing down of any and all newspaper opposition.<sup>41</sup> The basic problem here was the lack of a constitution and of constitutional rights for the people. The despotic excesses of Carrera were also fundamental. The work of the only two legal organs of the government press, the Review and the Gazette--of Pavón and Milla--also loomed large in the political ferment of 1848. Milla was very important to the history of that key year in his capacity as an editor.

Since the question of constitutional government was the underlying problem of the entire thirty-year regime of the Conservative Party, it is essential to view the conflicting attitudes towards government and justice. These fundamental viewpoints changed very little, if at all, throughout the years of José Milla's active participation as a civil servant, and this discussion will serve to illustrate the political ideology under which his governmental and literary careers were developed.

The aristocratic Conservatives saw Carrera as a dangerous ally, essentially crude and ignorant. The numerous cases of unnecessary death to his troops, his political enemies, or to anyone seriously incurring his disfavor, were a constant reminder to the imprudent. Therefore, those who had to get along with him, the Conservative aristocrats who needed his military might to control the processes of government, adopted what they liked to call a "prudent" policy toward Carrera. This meant keeping out of his way whenever possible, never openly opposing his high-

handed usurpation of civil rights--even where one's own family or a near relative was involved--sending him off to campaign outside the capital as often as possible, and, in general, adopting a shameful technique of acquiescence in his barbaric ways.

The military view of constitutional rights was far less complicated. A Liberal paper called El Album Republicano was published in nine numbers up until April 28, 1848, with increasingly enthusiastic reception by the public of the capital. Dr. Pedro Molina was a leading writer, and he was summarily imprisoned in the San José Castle, as the local dungeon for political and criminal prisoners was called. A squad of soldiers simply came to his home and marched him off on a verbal, not a legally drawn writ, by Carrera. The judge of the departmental court of first instance was appealed to, and immediately, on May 10, he issued an order to the commandant to produce Molina at once and to show written cause for his imprisonment.

That official replied the same day as follows:

Mr. Justice of the First Instance:

The undersigned Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic, happening to carry out the command of the department and having placed Doctor Pedro Molina in prison, has done so at the behest of a verbal order that he received from His Excellency, General and President of the Republic: since Mr. Molina is at the disposition of His Excellency, he cannot be brought before you.

With the explanation, I return your writ.

Guatemala, May 10, 1848

Antonio Palomo Valdez<sup>42</sup>

Needless to say, Molina remained in jail. When his family went to the judges, Montúfar reported that they "loved their appointments and their

salaries a great deal and proceeded with much tact along the path that they called prudence."<sup>42</sup>

In the Liberal Party, José Francisco Barrundia--who had asked Milla for his anti-Carrera poem in 1844--and Pedro Molina were the leaders. Their following included a large group of young people like Lorenzo Montúfar, a great part of the artisan class, many army leaders, and the liberal president of the state of Salvador, Doroteo Vasconcelos, with his followers.<sup>44</sup> Their main concern lay with the absence of a constitution and with the abuse of individual liberties, and an excellent example of their opposition to Carrera on those scores occurred early in 1848.

In February, a young student of the Liberal Party ordered printed a circular entitled El Temor, or "Fear," leaving his name with the printer. He was Lorenzo Montúfar.<sup>45</sup> It was a brief, two-paragraph, query as to Carrera's intentions regarding capital punishment, since the dictator had written a year earlier that he abhorred capital punishment. It referred to a recent rumor of a mass execution by the government, and, in closing, Montúfar summarized the fears of the moment by writing:

"We want, then, to learn under what powers nine men have been shot in these days (according to what is said) without drawing them a writ, nor giving them a hearing? We do not put this question to wound any person, but rather that, in view of the fact that the law of individual guarantees has been infringed, we fear for our friends, our families, and for ourselves.

Guatemala, February 25, 1848  
Some Guatemalans<sup>46</sup>

Montúfar was summoned before Luis Batres, leader of the nobility

and occupant of the all-important cabinet post of gobernación, or government. The Liberals feared and hated him for they knew what he would do to their proposed governmental reforms and for the techniques he employed to keep the Conservatives in power. The young man was "armed" with his constitutional rights, as the Liberals saw them; and he told Batres that "they were the Constitution of 1825, which many people consider in force in the part concerning guarantees; they were the law of December 5, 1839; they were the law on freedom of the press emitted by the Constituent Congress which was installed on December 8, 1845."<sup>47</sup>

This was the Liberal viewpoint on constitutional government,<sup>48</sup> but the Conservative leader Luis Batres claimed the Constitution of 1825 was not in force due to Guatemala's withdrawal from the United Provinces in 1839. Montúfar said perhaps not in its organic part, but surely in the matter of fundamental guarantees. Batres replied: "That law is not in effect, and I am not going into scholastic questions at this time."<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, he advised Montúfar to consider where his course of action must surely lead him. Montúfar felt he had broken no law so he need not fear the government. Batres' reply highlighted the dichotomy between the aristocrats and Carrera within the Conservative ranks: "You have nothing to fear from the government; but, you surely do have from the military men whom you have offended by your paper."<sup>50</sup> "Are you a child? Watch out where this leads you."<sup>51</sup> Montúfar's indignant rejoinder: "Here you have the Public Law of the servile aristocratic party."

The following day, a government patrol came to his home at six in the morning to arrest him, and its leader, surprised to find him still

there, entered the house himself and hid Montúfar. The patrol then searched the house and returned to report the escape of the student. Montúfar took asylum with the French consul, Mr. Raymundo Baradère, fleeing to San Salvador on June 24, some three months after his published handbill came out. The Liberals usually opposed Carrera in vain, even though a great deal of support was often given them in their cause by such Conservatives as Batres and such smaller lights as the patrol leader who aided don Lorenzo to escape punishment on this occasion.

A fourth important faction in the anarchy of the times was that of the departmental rebel leaders and their followers, confederates, in a manner of speaking, of the Liberals. These were for the most part the nameless opposition and the cannon fodder in the anti-Carrera movement, but they shared with Carrera himself the role of the despicable ally. While the Conservatives needed Carrera and therefore tolerated him, the Liberals needed the rebels, for the Liberals of the capital seldom dirtied their own hands with physical force. It was worthy of note that the Liberal historian, Lorenzo Montúfar, usually avoided mentioning the identity of the martyrs to Carrera's brutality, calling them "nine individuals," or "some prisoners," or some equally impersonal term. While they made good cause for the intellectual Liberal leaders against Carrera, they did not even merit the recognition of having their names recorded posthumously by their liberal historian.

Montúfar's description of this period of civilization and barbarism in Guatemala was the following:

The highland chieftains were ignorant and uncouth men, and their troops were made up of the very same savages who had fought beside



Carrera. The civil war was one of barbarian versus barbarian. Such a spectacle for unhappy Guatemala. . . . Poor Guatemala!<sup>53</sup>

But, the Liberal Party had to use the same approach to political power when the opportunity arose as did the conservative camp. Just as Milla praised Carrera for the power he represented for a "stable" government under the Conservatives, Montúfar praised the fighter Serapio Cruz when he deserted Carrera to join the insurgents: "Cruz was a recognized military leader, who inspired confidence in good men, and he had a reputation for his reliability, his fearlessness, and his bravery."<sup>54</sup> Respectability lay not so much then in what a man did but for whom he did it; for Montúfar, the "good men" were of the Liberal cause.

The fifth important element in the chaotic state of events was the Roman Catholic Church in Guatemala. The Church's approach to politics was flexible in nature. If the government did not favor them, the ecclesiastics urged insurrection. If the government favored them, they urged blind obedience. In either case, the proper biblical texts and admonishments were invoked.<sup>55</sup> Preaching from the pulpit, public ceremonies, and printed circulars supported the view of the clergy, and during the Carrera regime the Church supported his measures and him personally. Probably the greatest burden presented by the Church in Guatemalan life under Carrera was the use of public wealth to flaunt religious activity constantly for the benefit of the Church, Carrera, and the aristocrats.

Many additional examples of these political intrigues could be drawn here, but these few selections will suffice to picture Guatemalan politics in Milla's day. This rather detailed description of the politi-

cal, economic, and social currents running through Guatemalan life from 1839 to 1871 sets the stage for the greater part of Milla's public career. He can now be identified within these trends of his time in order to come to some general conclusions on the life and works of the man at the end of this study.

Rafael Carrera was in serious trouble because of the preceding events and the constant pressure to remove him from the head of the government. At the end of January, 1848, Vice President Vicente Cruz, brother of Serapio, actually held the presidency, only to have Carrera resume the executive office on February 4 at the request of the Guatemala City Council.<sup>56</sup> Carrera's reorganization of the government was such that all hope of reform was gone. Every new incident increased political tension, and the editorials and news stories of the Review and the Gazette were a center of trouble. Milla and Pavón bore the brunt of Liberal attack on these newspapers and on the government they represented.

The February Revolution in France, which drove Louis Philippe to exile in England in February, 1848, furnished Liberal pens in Guatemala grist for their mill. Lamartine, the Catholic liberal and poet, whose works Milla had so animatedly cited as a student, was head of the provisional government of France. Liberal, revolutionary government was a dangerous idea for Guatemalans living under Carrera's rule to entertain, and the results were naturally explosive:

The singing of the Marseillaise and the hymn of the Girondists, which had sounded in Paris, resounded now in the schools, in the University, in the shops, in the military bodies, and even in the highest offices of the Executive Power of Guatemala.

All the young students, all the artisans, all men thirsting for liberty thought to hear themselves singing before the Palace of the

ancient Captains-General the beautiful words of the Marseillaise, and to see fall in bits not the thrones of Clovis, of Charlemagne, and of St. Louis, but the bloody saddle of the guerilla of Mataquescuintla.<sup>57</sup>

In the same month of France's liberal revolution, Presidential Decree Number 29 of February 14, established a body known as the Consejo Consultativo, or "Consultative Council," made up mainly of Conservatives, to advise with the president and his cabinet in matters of state.<sup>58</sup> On March 5, José Milla was named as its Secretary, with the editing of the Gaceta de Guatemala as his duty.<sup>59</sup> He now held both the editorship of the Economic Society's Review and that of the government's Gazette, a very powerful position for a fledgling Conservative twenty-six years of age. He held the two posts until May 26, when the final number of the Review appeared, a period of two and one-half months' time, and his initial task was that of combatting the liberal enthusiasm in Guatemala over the French February revolution.<sup>60</sup> Because of the timing of his appointment and because of the obvious regard of the Conservative Party for his writing ability, this appointment appears to have been made for the sole reason of bolstering party propaganda with the best young Conservative writer available. This belief is strengthened because Pavón, who had himself edited the Gazette, sat on the Consultative Council which named Milla to the post,<sup>61</sup> and, had he wanted the post for himself, he undoubtedly could have had it.

The Liberals countered Milla with articles in the Manual de la sociedad de Medicina ("The Monthly Review of the Society of Medicine"), the Republican Album, and occasional handbills. Since the press was the only weapon available to the intellectual wing of the Liberals, Milla

opposed them in one of the key areas of political conflict in 1848. The first few numbers of the Album carried articles on the need for freedom of the press, the need for a constituent assembly, an appeal against the Review of Pavón and Milla, the events in France, the law of guarantees and rights, and accusations of political machinations contrary to Guatemalan interests with Britain's Consul Frederick Chatfield over British protectorates in Central America.<sup>62</sup> So the struggle for power was fought with ink by the intellectuals of the capital, while Carrera made frequent forays into the departments to deal with the rebels in a more lethal fashion.

The formation of the Consultative Council augured ill for the hopes of the Liberals for truly representative government. Milla, as Secretary and as editor of the official Gazette after March 5, reported in that newspaper on the nature of this executive body whose ordinary sessions were held in the principal salon of the government on Wednesdays and Saturdays.<sup>63</sup> In the absence of a national constitutional body, the legality of its establishment and function was defended by Milla as follows:

It would be a great mistake certainly to suppose that a Government Council could replace a representative body. Each differs in its origin, in its organisation, and in objective and authority with which it is established. Representative bodies emanate directly or indirectly from the people, dictate laws, impose revenues, authorize concessions, and levy taxes. Councils are an integral part of government which call together certain persons to enlighten the government with their knowledge and experience. These bodies have no representative character, and in order to fulfill their objective, it is necessary that the government have complete liberty to summon to them those citizens that it may consider most apt to solve those matters to be met. The government . . . is the only one to carry out resolutions. The Counselors provide the bringing together of ideas and practical experience, prepare the studies, and peruse those

matters which demand a serious and detailed examination before being decided upon. All governments have them . . .<sup>64</sup>

Milla concluded this second editorial after his appointment to the editorship of the Gazette with his viewpoint on the position of a public servant, and it was a basic position on which in later years he elaborated a great many times:

For the public man, security of his own conscience and confidence in the rectitude of his intentions are a recourse in the midst of the conflict of passions. On the other hand, the country is on the ascendancy and will learn, sooner or later, to judge the matter of ways and means. It is essential that time continue and complete the events whose developments we men serve with such meager means in order that the designs of Providence be fulfilled.

In Guatemala, what ought to be the objective for all is that the prosperity of the Republic may not be interrupted. Convinced of this sound principle, we shall see what, from this side and that, is with this objective placed in the balance. \_\_\_The Editors.<sup>65</sup>

Milla saw the error of anarchy with all its negative results. The "ways and means" to end the chaotic drain on government resources and national economy lay with the Conservative Party as far as he was concerned. He also clearly understood the historical period in which he lived to be that of an incipient stage in the emergence of the Republic, although independence had occurred twenty-seven years before.

Writing of the uprisings in the countryside to the east and southeast of Guatemala City, he said:

Our small, nascent republic, surrounded by difficulties, suffering the dire consequences of the revolutions in which the state has been involved, with limited moral means to regulate its government, has brought together the conservative elements, and is making an effort to survive. . . .

Its duty is to suffocate the rebellion, to give security to nationals and to foreigners, and not to permit vulgar and unworthy pretensions against the cultured classes. For those who fan the flame of revolt and wish against all reason to put the government into an embarrassing position in order to compromise it with foreign governments, it would be foolishness to think that there were no



means available and inherent in every government to avoid that.<sup>66</sup>

There is here a thinly veiled hint that the government would take measures against its opposition, and this did not endear him the more to the Liberals like Molina, Barrundia, and Montúfar. Milla, from the beginning, made the careful distinction as between the elite and the uncultured, or incultos. For him the Indian would always remain a lower class to be exploited by the European, and this will be noted as a feature of the Indian in Milla's later writing of historical novels.

In an editorial on uprisings of indigenous people in Yucatán and Argentina, he states that these were the two American areas where the politicians had most exaggerated what they chose to call "liberal" principles. His views with respect to the Indians and his keen appraisal of the future of Argentina were worthy of note:

In Buenos-Aires that course of brilliant theories has come to end in the dictatorship of General Rosas, a course that if it has been glorious for the country has been so because he has resisted foreign aggression. It has not been able to give any progress other than at the will of the same caudillo and his lieutenants. The State is wracked with continual wars, and the indigenous races are annihilating themselves only to leave the field open to an immense European immigration to penetrate along the River Platte and its tributaries. And, it will continue laying down in those regions the foundations of another great nation.<sup>67</sup>

Little did he know how true this prediction for the Argentine nation was to result with its present European racial stock!

Following up this editorial, he related his viewpoint on the indigenous situation of Guatemala where so much rested on the native races:

. . . it is very dangerous to permit alarms and prejudices, and still more so to develop rivalry and dissension among the several classes that comprise a society. We know well that the uncivilized mountain tribes, living without rules nor any law, have been called

savages and barbarians. Our other Indians labor in the fields, have temples, priests, justice, respect the laws, and pay some contributions too, are even used at times to fulfill the appearance of sovereign acts and elections. They have been considered uncultured and poorly civilized, but never have they been called savages.<sup>68</sup>

Milla was far more moderate than the so-called Liberals like Montúfar, for the latter at times was completely illiberal in his outlook. Milla's concern was to work with the country's resources, natural or human, but to create stable government at any cost.

The Carrera government was forced to tighten its controls as popular agitation against the government increased. Accordingly, the following decree was issued:

19 All those who supply elements of war or any other aid to the rebels, and those who advise them or maintain correspondence with them, will be judged and punished as guilty of armed rebellion.

29 All those who through any means urge on the uprising and publish writings in the press, which directly or indirectly excite the rebels against the law or against the security of the peaceful inhabitants of the Republic, either nationals or foreigners, will be tried and punished as guilty of the same crime.

39 The cases of those guilty of crimes to which this decree refers will be judged according to the Ordinance of the Military Courts.

Decreed in the Government House, in Guatemala on April 5, 1848.--Rafael Carrera!--The Secretary of Government,

Luis Batres.<sup>69</sup>

By early May the popularity of the Republican Album had continued to increase, and a Liberal, Mariano Gálvez Irungaray, published a handbill in which he prescribed the Review as a narcotic. He said, "when he could not sleep he placed the Review beneath his pillow and instantly began to snore."<sup>70</sup> Agitation reached a peak of excitement until the Album was shut down by the government with a last audacious publication entitled "Death of the Album. A Necrology of Itself" with a description of its death in an unequal battle with despotism:



Rafael Carrera



Manuel Francisco Pavón



Luis Batres

Fig. 3.--Guatemalan Conservative Leaders of the Thirty-Year Regime

THE ALBUM, with this number, has breathed its last. It scarcely had time to express its gratitude and to dedicate its final respects to the people. It died, as has been seen, of a violent death in an unequal, unjust struggle against despotism. It perished in battle, not from consumption by fear. It appears now like a desperate and bloody specter. The desires of its enemies are fulfilled. But it may some day arise again; and it is known that every resurrection is glorious. At present, it lies where the good rest and the evil fear to tread. Its popular voice silenced, the eternal duo of the Review and the Gazette alone remain to give the public the law and to be the exclusive light in Guatemala.<sup>71</sup>

On May 26, the last number of the Review also appeared, perhaps "prudently" terminating its publication in view of the trouble the feuding in the press was causing Carrera. At this point, Milla was left with the post of editor of the Gazette only.

At this time, Carrera decreed a direct election of all the people to send deputies from the departments to an assembly of a representative congress for the nation. This assembly was to be convoked on August 15.<sup>72</sup> However, Milla's campaign to discredit popular government such as that symbolized by the Second Republic in France continued, and, with the Liberals temporarily silenced, the French consular officers now provided the opposition. In June, a group of Frenchmen, working with the French Consul, presented a protest to the Guatemalan government against so-called insults against France by Milla in the Gazette. If this protest were not printed on the next issue of the Gazette, in Spanish and French on the first page, French relations with Guatemala would be suspended.

The government replied that in printing articles in the Gazette no disrespect was meant France, only the populacho francés, the French rabble. The Consul replied that France had no rabble, and, if satisfaction were not given by noon, the flag mast of the consulate and the

coat of arms would come down. On June 21, the appointed day, they came down, the insults in the Gazette continuing as before.<sup>73</sup> Milla as editor of the government newspaper was the villain of the moment in the eyes of France and the Guatemalan Liberals.

The events of 1848 were rapidly reaching a climax by mid-July, when José Milla's childhood benefactor and paternal guide died.

With profound sentiment, we announce to our readers that through letters from Cádiz we learned that Canon Doctor José María Castilla, of the Holy Church, who was traveling through Europe, died in Madrid at the end of April, stricken with a violent pulmonary infection. . . . In another number, we will consecrate an article to his memory, recounting his virtues and services to Guatemala.<sup>74</sup>

On Monday, July 17, there were solemn rites in the Metropolitan Cathedral for Father Castilla, but Milla made no personal comment in the Gazette.<sup>75</sup> Three issues later, Milla's name was no longer on the masthead as editor and no known account of a necrology written by Milla regarding Castilla has yet been published. Therefore, it appears that a shift in political fortunes in the month of August may well have precluded Milla's writing of the man who had meant a great deal to him in childhood.

Three days before the funeral ceremony for Castilla, Carrera met and defeated the rebels under Serapio Cruz on the plains of Patzún, located in the highlands to the west of Guatemala City. However, Carrera lacked sufficient power to subjugate the highland center of resistance at Quetzaltenango, seriously weakening his political position and allowing the Liberals to enjoy a new-found strength at the polls to enable them to elect their chief members to the constituent assembly planned for August.<sup>76</sup> Milla has been credited with accompanying Carrera on an expedition to the highlands (Los Altos) and the Pacific coastal plains.<sup>77</sup>



the only campaign involving both these areas made in 1848. It was strange that Milla wrote no account of the expedition for the Gazette; the events of the battle were written by a Mariano López from the general field headquarters at Patzún.<sup>78</sup> This was perhaps explained by his being relieved of the editorship very soon after the expedition ended since he may not have had time to write of the battle, or other more pressing matters may have intervened. However, his absence from Guatemala City in the company of Carrera seems even more probable from another fact. Of all the civil and ecclesiastical officials who attended the funeral rites on July 28 for Father Castilla, no mention was made of Milla being present or participating.<sup>79</sup> Had he been in the capital, he would surely have taken part in that important ceremony in view of his intimate and lifelong friendship with Dr. Castilla.

#### The Liberal Party Assumes Power

On the first day of August, an independent Estado de los Altos, "Highland State," was proclaimed, dedicated to the overthrow of Carrera and supported by the liberal president Francisco Dueñas of Salvador.<sup>80</sup> By September 5, it was provided with a provisional government,<sup>81</sup> to the outrage of the Conservatives. On August 4, the same Palomo Valdez who had jailed Dr. Pedro Molina earlier, entered a preliminary session of the Constituent Assembly, held at the University, and maltreated a deputy before the assembled Liberals and Conservatives. Even the aristocrats rebelled at this, and the deputy was released--only to be so intimidated and fearful that he publically announced he held no bitterness toward the government.<sup>82</sup>

The following day, acting on the strategy of Luis Batres, Carrera announced he would resign the day the Constituent Assembly was convened on August 15. In Guatemala City, he proclaimed this as follows:

GUATEMALANS: the end of my public career approaches. The same day that the representative body is convened, my name will cease to be the cause of enmities. That day my duty to sustain a fratricidal struggle ends. The peace and tranquility of the people; the security of people and of property; the well-being of honorable and peaceful elements of the cities and countryside, and the conservation of this beautiful city, were my duty and I have had to defend them. The day that I am relieved of the government, the duty to preserve these sacred interests of society will continue; but, you cannot then tell yourselves that the struggle is to sustain one man. To you will then fall the noble undertaking of saving the Republic.<sup>83</sup>

Luis Batres thought the Liberals, once in power, would soon commit political suicide, permitting Rafael Carrera to return to Guatemala in triumph. Carrera actually did submit his resignation on the appointed day, and it was accepted with the general desire being that he leave the country for Mexico. On August 10, the Gazette still was under the nominal editorship of José Milla, but when the next number appeared on August 25, his name was missing from the masthead for he had resigned his post rather than work under the new regime.<sup>84</sup> That same number was the one that printed General Carrera's resignation.

By this time, Milla's personal fortune was tied closely to that of Rafael Carrera without any doubt, and it was indeed a strange reversal of form for the Milla who in his liberal schooldays had condemned Carrera so bitterly as "son of misery and of nothing." When Carrera's proscription was decreed on October 13, 1848, Milla appeared to have completely fallen from public favor along with the man whom he had ardently supported since 1846. For all practical purposes, he was again reduced to

unemployment and to economic straits comparable to those from which he had risen fairly rapidly in prominence in the Conservative ranks. In his first appearance in the political arena in Guatemala, Pepe Milla went down in defeat.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 71-72.

<sup>2</sup> Ramón Rosa, "Don José Milla y Vidaurre," Revista de la Universidad [Honduras], Año XI (March 15, 1921), 186-187.

<sup>3</sup> Ramón Rosa, Oro de Honduras, comp. Rafael Heliodoro Valle (Tegucigalpa, 1948-1954), II, 244-245.

<sup>4</sup> Bancroft, op. cit., III, 267; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 468.

<sup>5</sup> La Sociedad Económica, III (Guatemala, 1874), p. [1].

<sup>6</sup> Sociedad económica de Guatemala, Memoria que presentó a la Sociedad Económica en la junta general celebrada el 19 de mayo de 1850, su secretario D. José Milla . . . (Guatemala, 1850), p. [1].

<sup>7</sup> Gaceta Oficial, April 3, 1846, p. 115.

<sup>8</sup> Bancroft, op. cit., III, 269; César Brañas, Tras las huellas de Juan Diéguez (Guatemala, n.d.), p. 25; Vela, op. cit., II, 191-193.

<sup>9</sup> "Cuestión gramático-personal," La Semana, March 11, 1866, p. 3. This editorial statement acknowledged the fact that in 1846 Milla " . . . already had delivered the servile speech to which don Lorenzo [Montúfar] alludes."

<sup>10</sup> Montúfar, Memorias, p. 73.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 71-72.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 72. A careful search of the Gaceta Oficial for this general period of time failed to uncover any such printed speech by Milla. It was not recorded in the Revista of the Economic Society either.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "El Sr. Don Manuel F. Pavón. (Noticia Biográfica)," Gaceta de Guatemala, May 30 and June 14, 1855; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 191-192.

<sup>16</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 193.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>18</sup> Sebastián Aceña, "Población del Estado," Gaceta Oficial.

September 30, 1846, p. 1. The author stated: "The present population of the entire State should be about 936,809 inhabitants, almost equal to that calculated by Mr. Santiago Barberena, which is 934,950."

<sup>19</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 186.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 198-202. Indigo was a blue dye obtained from various plants, and cochineal was a dyestuff produced from the dry bodies of the female of an insect which grew on certain varieties of cactus, particularly the nopal. Of the two dye products, cochineal furnished some four-fifths of the export product by value. For the peak export period of 1851-1855, exports totalled \$6,188,298, a very limited amount of foreign trade.

<sup>21</sup>Valentín Solórzano Fernández, Historia de la evolución económica de Guatemala (Mexico, 1947), p. 258.

<sup>22</sup>This weekly paper bore the full title of La Revista, Periódico Semanario de la Sociedad Económica de Amigos del Estado de Guatemala, and it was published in one volume of 72 numbers, beginning with Number 1 on December 3, 1846, and finishing with Number 72 on May 26, 1848. The 288 pages were numbered consecutively. Beginning with Number 17, on March 26, 1847, the phrase "del Estado" was deleted, leaving the name "Sociedad Económica de Amigos de Guatemala." The publication date was planned for Thursday of each week, and the price was to be a half real for each issue by subscription and a real for individual numbers.

<sup>23</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, p. 88.

<sup>24</sup>La Revista, December 3, 1846, pp. 2-3. The speech by Milla was printed here under the title, "Esequias de D. Francisco Cabrera."

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>27</sup>La Revista, December 10, 1846, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, p. 86.

<sup>29</sup>La Revista, March 26, 1847, p. 66.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., October 29, 1847, pp. 167-168.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 168.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., December 17, 1847, p. 196.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1848, p. 108; Ibid., February 18, 1848, p. 232.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., February 25, 1848, p. 236.

<sup>35</sup>Gaceta Oficial, March 29, 1847, pp. 239-240.



- <sup>36</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 271. <sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 271-272.
- <sup>38</sup>Zamora Castellanos, op. cit., pp. 249-250.
- <sup>39</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 427-428.
- <sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 425-428. <sup>41</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 86-89.
- <sup>42</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 445-446.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 446. <sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 430.
- <sup>45</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, pp. 92-103. This chapter of his memoirs was entitled, "El Temor, Mi Primera Publicación Poética."
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid., pp. 95-96; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 481-482.
- <sup>47</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 433.
- <sup>48</sup>Russell H. Fitzgibbon (ed.), The constitutions of the Americas (Chicago, 1948), p. 397. Actually, only one constitution had been in effect, that of October 11, 1825, adopted by the State of Guatemala as a member of the United Provinces. A second constitution--the first under the Republic of Guatemala--was not promulgated until October 19, 1851.
- <sup>49</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 434-435. <sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 434.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 435. <sup>52</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 439-440. <sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 441.
- <sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 437. <sup>56</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 269, 272.
- <sup>57</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 442.
- <sup>58</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, February 18, 1848, p. 188, and March 3, 1848, p. 196.
- <sup>59</sup>Ibid., March 11, 1848, p. 1; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 436-437; La Revista, March 10, 1848, p. 244.
- <sup>60</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 448.
- <sup>61</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, March 3, 1848, p. 1.
- <sup>62</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 435-436.
- <sup>63</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, March 22, 1848, p. 1.
- <sup>64</sup>Ibid., March 16, 1848, pp. 205-206. <sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., April 6, 1848, p. 8.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., June 21, 1848, p. 50.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., July 5, 1848, p. 58.

<sup>69</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 440-441.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 436.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 444.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 447.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., pp. 448-449.

<sup>74</sup> Gaceta de Guatemala, July 12, 1848, p. 62.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., July 19, 1848, p. 67.

<sup>76</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 454-456.

<sup>77</sup> García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

"In the said year [1848], he accompanied General Carrera in the capacity of secretary, on an expedition through the Highlands and the Great Coast." Vela, op. cit., II, 85, repeats this, as do other biographers. McBryde, op. cit., pp. 5-6, defines Los Altos (the Highlands) as the Cordillera forming the Continental Divide range, in which Quetzaltenango lies, and the Costa Grande (Great Coast) as the wider western Pacific plain. Felipe Mery Fernández, Geografía de Centroamérica (3d ed.; Guatemala, 1949), pp. 191, 194, places the Costa Grande in the departments of Suchitepequez and Retalhuleu.

<sup>78</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 454-456.

<sup>79</sup> "Centenario de la muerte de un prócer de la independencia el ilustre canónigo doctor José María de Castilla," El Imparcial, April 22, 1948, pp. 3, 9.

<sup>80</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 456-458.

<sup>81</sup> Bancroft, op. cit., III, 274-275.

<sup>82</sup> Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 460-461.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 462.

<sup>84</sup> La Semana, March 11, 1866, p. 3, explains why he resigned.

Don José Milla was named on the masthead of the weekly Gazette down through Volume 4, Number 20 (August 10, 1848). In succeeding numbers, Victoriano Grijalva, José Farfán, and Alejandro Marure were named as editors. Most biographical sketches of Milla err in this point because he has usually been considered as editor of the Gazette from 1848 until 1871.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RETURN OF CONSERVATIVE POWER AND JOSE MILLA, 1848-1856

Don José Milla y Vidsurre . . . awaited Carrera like a man longing for his Saviour, and he went from house to house and from tertulia to tertulia, speaking on behalf of the man whom he had called "son of misery and of nothing."

Lorenzo Montúfar

### The Disorganization of the Liberal Party, 1848-1849

In the months immediately following Rafael Carrera's banishment from Guatemala, the strategy proposed by Luis Batres to the caudillo was borne out by political schism and general ineffectiveness on the part of the Liberals. The autocratic Conservatives remained in the majority in the constituent assembly, while the Liberals commanded a fairly large representation too. Juan Antonio Martínez, a Liberal and a political nonentity<sup>1</sup> was named president to replace Carrera. He got the executive office because the Conservatives felt he would not oppose their interests, and, in fact, Carrera's officers remained in power under Martínez. The insurgents opposed Martínez, demanding concessions and continuing the civil war, and Martínez, too, resigned effective November 28, after a little over three months in office.<sup>2</sup> Anarchy spread in Guatemala, as, in September the Highland State was seated at Quetzaltenango, as the sixth independent state of Central America.

The Conservatives took good advantage of these affairs to confront the supposedly Liberal government with additional trouble in an

already chaotic state of national affairs. Since the Guatemalan and Salvadoran liberals were very friendly at the time, the Conservatives determined to bring about a split in the Liberal front. The constituent assembly was maneuvered into confirming the Carrera decree of March 21, 1847, creating the Republic of Guatemala, thus alienating the country from further Central American unionism which the liberals desired. By motion of the Liberal leader himself, the resolution passed on September 14, 1848. Apparently, the aristocratic camp made their financial support of the army fighting the rebellion of the Highland State the price of this legislation, and the Liberals accepted that.<sup>3</sup>

As Carrera had stated when he resigned, the destiny of public affairs fell to the Liberals for salvation, and the gravity of civil strife now became very real to them. In an Independence Day editorial in the Gazette, under the editorship of Andrés Bardón, one of the primary causes of the continued failure to stabilize republican government was bemoaned:

And the government is not excused by saying that the Indians have not asked that means of education be given them, because the prime objective for which authority is created is to aid and protect all who need help--even though they do not ask it; a father educates his son, without waiting for him to ask that this be done. . . . We must educate the Indians if we want to keep them from continuing as the bulwark of tyranny: let's teach them, if we want to guarantee the democratic institutions we have adopted, because such institutions cannot exist if the majority does not participate in public affairs; let's train them--not just because humanity and justice cry out for us to consider everyone by the same standard--because for our own sake we may thus avoid the horrible conflict of castes that threatens; let's guide them, for that matter, if we want to keep a worthy place in the world and not appear to the eyes of the civilized nations as a union of barbarians, unworthy of guiding the destiny of the people.<sup>4</sup>

The Liberals now had the opportunity to face the urgent problem

of post-Independence: what to do with an overwhelmingly indigenous population, a mass which had been set into motion in a continuing series of disastrous civil wars and intrigues. And, they were partially to blame for the initiation of the rebellious times, too, for under Barrundia a faction of the Liberal party had set itself against the Liberal president, Mariano Gálvez, using the Indian hordes as an instrument to dominate Guatemala in the previous decade.<sup>5</sup>

Lorenzo Montúfar knew this essential weakness of his own party, for he often referred to it as "the Liberal Party always a DISORGANIZER itself proposed to DISORGANIZE the servile move. . . ." This was what Luis Batres had counted on in advising Carrera to leave the presidency to the Liberals for a while. They simply could not maintain any party unity, and now, Luis Molina—son of the top Liberal leader, Pedro Molina—called for a schism in the party ranks. He formed up a third party, calling it the Moderado, or "Moderate" Party. This new faction was made up principally of Liberals, so that it further weakened the number of members in the Liberal minority, while the Conservatives remained solidly unified.<sup>6</sup> Dr. Pedro Molina went with his son to the Moderate Party, and Barrundia remained with the Liberals, thus splitting their top leaders into two separate bands.<sup>7</sup>

José Bernardo Escobar succeeded to the presidency when Martínez resigned, but he found he had two antagonists in place of one. The aristocrats blocked his measures, and the new Moderate Party was in the opposition as well. The Cruz brothers, Serapio and Vicente, threatened the capital with their highland rebels, and by January 1, 1849, Escobar



was out and Mariano Paredes, also a Liberal, came into the executive office. In less than five months' time, three Liberal presidents had held office! Dissension had been inherent in the Liberal ranks up to this time, but in January, 1849, Rafael Carrera again put in an appearance to add a very positive threat to any stable Liberal government.

Carrera sent a letter on January 24 to the government in Guatemala City telling of his intention to place himself at the head of a division of troops to return to bring order to that government.<sup>8</sup> This threat of his return provoked a proclamation from General Serapio Cruz on February 21 which had the familiar ring of Latin American statements about deposed presidents. Cruz professed surprise with Carrera, failing to see how complete his exile had been. The charge was then hurled that Carrera hoped for ten more years of rule in order that his family might remove another 300,000 pesos from the economy, as they had done the previous August.<sup>9</sup>

#### A Caudillo Returns, 1849

Whether by coincidence or by purposeful politics, José Milla's own star began to rise at precisely the time Carrera reappeared as a presidential contender. The official Gazette carried the announcement that President Paredes had accorded Milla a place on the Commission of Foreign Relations on February 14, 1849,<sup>10</sup> so he once again embarked on a government career. He had evidently undergone certain difficulties after the downfall of Carrera during the various Liberal regimes in the months after August of the previous year. Montúfar related that:

Don José Milla y Vidaurre, unemployed at that time, without any literary career since he had failed to take his law degree, without the editorship of the Gazette, without the management of the Review of the Economic Society, and without any visible means of support,

awaited Carrera like a man longing for his Saviour, and he went from house to house and from tertulia to tertulia, speaking on behalf of the man whom he had called "son of misery and of nothing."<sup>11</sup>

The Batres strategy was rapidly winning out with the reappearance of the strong hand of Carrera in Guatemala. By April, Carrera was well established in Quetzaltenango, and, in effect, Paredes turned the government back to the caudillo in subsequent negotiations, even though Paredes was a nominal Liberal. By August 7, less than a full year from his resignation, Carrera was restored to the rank of lieutenant-general and commander-in-chief of the army. "The compact between oligarchy and Barbarism was consummated," said Montúfar,<sup>12</sup> and Carrera entered upon a new era of his political career when the power of the Conservative party went unchallenged for the most part.

With Carrera again in the role of protector of the interests of the Republic, José Milla also shared better times under Paredes, who continued as president. Milla, at the age of twenty-six, living for his government work--or from it, as the case may have been--found himself again dependent on the destiny of an ignorant, barbaric caudillo, allegedly a puppet of the aristocrats and the Church, a man frequently called by Montúfar, "the beloved caudillo of the people." But, for the twenty-two years from 1849 until 1871, Milla was to rise steadily to a position of high prominence in his country.

The second step in his recovery of political footing--for he was already a member of the Foreign Relations office--came with the calling into session once again on September 21, 1849, of the Consultative Council, of which he had formerly been Secretary.<sup>13</sup> That advisory body began

to meet again with its former officers restored now that Carrera was back in the saddle, and Milla served the secretaryship until the pressure of his work in the Ministry of Foreign Relations and with the Gazette forced him to resign on July 22, 1851,<sup>14</sup> nearly two years later. It was shortly after September 21, 1849, the date Milla rejoined the Council, that the government named him to a vacancy which occurred in the secretariat of Foreign Relations, making him Chief Clerk (Oficial Mayor) on September 24. With this post went the editorship of the Gazette, so Milla was back in the newspaper business once more.<sup>15</sup>

Among the varied public and private activities in which Milla participated during his lifetime, his most active occupation was that of publicist. He began his career as editor of the official papers, first the Review and then the Gazette, and, in later years he went on to publish his own private weeklies and, finally, to write on the first Guatemalan daily newspaper, as will be shown later. His earliest training in newspaper editing came with these official organs, however, arising out of his association with M. F. Pavón.

With the proclamation of the republic in March, 1847, the name of the government paper was changed from the Gaceta Oficial to the Gaceta de Guatemala for the purpose of keeping in stride with the march of historical events as a new era in Guatemalan history began.<sup>16</sup> That was the name of the paper in March, 1848, when José Milla assumed the editorship. For his part, Milla quite soon editorialized on "A New Form for the Gazette," describing the format he felt most apropos of the times and the paper:

With Number 50, which was published on the 22nd day of this month /March, 1848/, Volume 3 of this newspaper ended. The fourth volume begins to appear, as our readers will see, considerably augmented and improved, in form and content. Official documents will continue to be inserted: there will be news from the departments, appraising the public of the current state of supplies, consumer's goods, prices, and so forth. News of the states of Central America will also be published, of Mexico and the United States, and whatever there is from Europe. To render the Gazette more agreeable, space will be given in its columns to the important and curious events brought by foreign newspapers, and it will contain a serial-story column that will carry the biographies of celebrated contemporaries, or some other adequate reproduction. Finally, space will be given in it to anything which is not contrary to its official nature.<sup>17</sup>

In the following twenty numbers before he was relieved as editor, Milla did fulfill his promise to print the biographies of such celebrities as Robert Peel (Numbers 1-3), François Guizot (Numbers 3-5), and Francisco Martínez de la Rosa (Numbers 5, 8-9, 13-17, 19, and 20), all conservative statesmen and writers of prominence in the period of the growth of liberalism in Europe from 1830 to 1848. Over the years, Milla also managed to insert the biographies, usually in the form of a necrology, of many of the celebrated contemporaries of Guatemala. In 1851, for example, biographical notices appeared for Field Marshal don Francisco Cáscares,<sup>18</sup> and historian Alejandro Marure.<sup>20</sup> Today, these contemporary biographical accounts stand as excellent sources for the history of the past century for those who go to the newspapers to use them.

In 1855, Guatemala lost three of the finest men of her aristocratic generation when Mariano Aycinena, Manuel Francisco Pavón, and Felipe Molina died between January and April of that year. Their biographical sketches appeared in the Gazette, and there is no room for doubt that Milla felt a keen sense of loss in this vanishing generation of colonial elite.<sup>21</sup> As the years passed, he would come to remark on

this fact more than once. Milla sensed the gradual slipping away of the colonial order of elite society, and somehow his writing managed to convey the fact that he knew that a historical period of social order was vanishing with each death of an aristocrat. Because of his literary talents, his education, his positions of political prominence and growing social prestige, Milla identified himself with the aristocratic class. This, then, was his generation passing away.

In the biographical sketch of Aycinena, there was a passage describing the exile of over two hundred distinguished Conservatives with "Archbishop Casaus and many priests of great virtues . . ." in 1829. Later, after 1837, "scarcely ten could return to Guatemala, and for that reason the loss of so many enlightened and polished men for the government and the administration of the country is being felt right down to the present [1855], along with the loss of a great amount of wealth that they could salvage and take with them."<sup>22</sup> The loss of Pavón, Milla's associate and benefactor for the past ten years, was the greatest blow of all:

The Republic has lost in him one of its most distinguished sons, and His Excellency, General Carrera, the most understanding, loyal, and zealous of his followers in the difficult and thorny task of the regeneration of the country. . . . His name [has been] joined intimately to the history of the country, particularly in the last sixteen years . . . [and] Mr. Pavón, is, we do not hesitate to state it, after General Carrera, the most important political figure that Guatemala has had since Independence.<sup>23</sup>

By 1855, the Gazette had grown from a four- to an eight-page format under Milla's editorship. He now had four principal sections in the paper. The first part was "Official" news, with notices signed by cabinet members or other authorities, decrees, and a "News Bulletin" for



official events. This was followed by a "Nonofficial" section containing Milla's editorial comments on correspondence and newspapers coming by packet from other parts of America and Europe. This included a section entitled "Chronicle--Various Notices," and that meant historical sketches, or chronicles, local news, theater, or critiques of foreign newspapers. A third part was entitled "Exterior," reproducing new items cited from papers in Central America, Europe, and the United States. And, the final part was for "Announcements," which included items such as fraternal organization announcements, sales of property, economic information on travel, produce, crops, and the like, as well as employment opportunities and long lists of books for sale in local bookshops. This section is a gold mine of data for social history.

Among the newspapers whose articles were reproduced or commented upon might be found the following random selection: The Gaceta de Nicaragua, the Gaceta de Costa-Rica, the Eco de España, El Universal of Mexico, the London Gazette, the Correo de Ultramar of France, the New York Weekly Herald, the Gaceta del Salvador, the Gaceta de Comayagua, the Panameño of New Granada, El Mercurio of Chile, the Heraldo de Lima, La Unión from New York, the United States' Evening Post, National Intelligencer, Union, Crónica of New York, and Picayune and Delta of New Orleans, the Gaceta de Honduras, the Gazeta of Havana, La Iberia of Mexico, the Monitor Universal, and El Eco Hispano-Americano. Coverage was excellent for Central America, the United States and Europe.

An advertisement of the sale of the Correo de Ultramar appeared as early as 1849 in the Gazette, and this acquaintanceship with the Correo

was to have significance much later in Milla's career when he went to work for that paper during his exile in 1871.<sup>24</sup> It was a Spanish edition of the Courrier d'outre-mer, a literary and illustrated paper which appeared in sixty-five volumes of well over a thousand numbers in Paris, France, between 1841 and 1885.<sup>25</sup> In Guatemala in 1854, it was sold in agencies located in the capital city, in Antigua, Amatitlán, Zacapa, and Quetzaltenango,<sup>26</sup> which would represent an impressive distribution for any foreign newspaper even at the present time. In the following year, it was advertised as an "important newspaper in Central America . . . whose fame, in Europe as well as in the Americas, has gained for it an undisputed and justly broad popularity."<sup>27</sup> For this study, however, it is of interest mainly to note that José Milla was introduced to the paper by the year 1849, more than twenty years before he went to work on it.

In Milla's thinking, acting, and writing, the frequent and continual implication of the importance of history and historical processes is of prime importance to an understanding of the man and his works. Several examples of Milla's fundamental awareness of the importance of history and his ability to describe current historical events have been noted already. In his approach to publishing, this awareness of the recording of history through the printed word underlay his writing, even though he did not always call it history, as in the following Gazette editorial on "The Press and Public Writers":

One of the most admirable and grandiose triumphs that human intelligence has achieved is, without any doubt, that of the invention of the printing press. It has lent reality and substance to thought; it has given duration to words, otherwise destined to be lost without leaving a single mark in their passing; it has brought into contact the remotest of peoples of this earth by the rapid and continual

communication of ideas; it has chained the past to the present, binding over deeds and thoughts of ancient times in order to transmit them like a precious heritage to future generations. The sciences and the arts owe their progress to the printing press, and civilization has received no meager aid from it in its glorious and dynamic march.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps an even more interesting example of Milla's historical orientation was to be found in another editorial written five years later in 1855. His observations are made on the general topic of "Newspaper Publications," and it is obvious that Milla saw in newspapers not only the task of communication of information but also that of providing a historical record of current affairs. He began his commentary by observing that:

. . . journalism among us is a delicate and weak plant, which has yet to put down roots; it cannot live and thrive except in the shadow and beneath the auspices of power. In Central-America many a newspaper publication has seen the light of day since Independence, enjoying only a passing existence with only those supported by government funds having some duration. The vast majority of our people do not read, either because they do not know how or do not want to learn; and with this premise in mind, one can see that the necessary consequence is that newspapers are something less than impossible in our country. When some political upheaval is attempted, to aid or to prepare a revolution, fifteen or twenty numbers have been issued of some newspaper, addressed only to exciting passions and poisoning spirits. With the necessity of the moment gone, the publication disappears . . . leaving nothing useful to record it passing.<sup>29</sup>

Milla felt that newspapers should have a certain literary appeal, as well as to serve to record official viewpoints, and he held that the non-official part of the Gazette was therefore essential to balance official notices and political chatter. He said in that same editorial, that:

Another important section of our newspapers should be that of the local chronicle, designed to contain all those facts that can give some idea outside the country of its state, its progress, spirit, and social trends. In this part, the Central-American newspapers

have always been very weak in interest. A foreign observer would search them in vain for that "local color" which marks a country and distinguishes it from the rest. In this, as in other points, the Gazette of Guatemala, drawing at first the sarcasm of ignorance and fighting with a certain village prudery which fears publicity, has begun to give notice of all that which can help form some idea of the customs and manner of being of our society, to permit other newspapers to make mention of that kind of fact. If the publications which came to light years ago in Central America had been written with the prelicity of the editorial staff of the Gazette, those newspapers would command twice the interest now and would acquire more as time passes, in the eyes of those persons who enjoy the study and knowledge of social conditions of a country in past ages.

Was this the beginning of a germ of thought? In another decade, Milla did actually embark upon a career as a costumbrista writer, and here clearly were early origins of the thinking which fostered that career of such distinction in sketching the customs of the local scene.

Milla felt that the depicting in his society of national customs, however, met with an inherent reluctance to print anything bordering on private matters, for:

In many countries of Europe and in the United States, the press has a vast field into which to spread because there is scant respect for the sacred condition of privacy. Among us, custom does not permit such a freedom of the press, and only the invasion of those matters affecting public affairs is tolerated.

Still, he seemed determined that newspapers should get further from abstractions on politics and philosophy and nearer to some of the facts of social existence.

In these few selections from Milla's thinking with regard to his publishing career, there could be seen the formative stage of thinking that later produced a literary mind with a determination to record his country's story and with a mature philosophy toward the writing of historical novels depicting events during the era of the Kingdom of Guatemala and early independence, sketches of local customs, and, eventually,

a formal history recording the events of the colonial epoch. Without a realization of the great importance of his journalistic training as an initial step to his literary career, the student of Milla misses a basic step in the development of this writer. Few, if any, students of Milla have seen fit to sufficiently emphasize this significant fact, as well as to recognize the great importance that newspapers played in making possible the publication of every one of Milla's known major works except his two-volume history.

While Milla pondered these matters of the obvious need for and lack of literary and historical writing in Guatemala, the earliest indications of what he would later provide as his own solution to this need began to appear. In July 1854, the translation of a contemporary account by a German traveler was printed in the Gazette under the title, "Fragments of the Diary of a German Traveler in the Highlands and the Suchiatepéquez Coast (Translated for the Gazette)."<sup>30</sup> A footnote by the German author showed Milla's influence in providing this foreigner's impression of Guatemala for Milla's readers. The traveler wrote: "In presenting these fragments to the public, in response to the flattering request of his esteemed friend Don J. M., the author believes that it is necessary to advise that . . ."

Milla showed a lifelong willingness to provide didactic materials for the education of the reading public. This selection, and those immediately preceding it, are early indications of that thinking. He was also acutely aware of his own position in public life in the posts of government service and as editor of the principal news source of



Guatemala. His concept of public service evolved in these early years to become a fundamental part of his personal philosophy.

In 1855, Milla met another traveler who later became prominent in the indigenous literature and history of Guatemala. Milla himself used this man's works in his own writing in later years. The Gazette announced:

The Abbé / Charles Etienne / Brasseur de Bourbourg.—This French clergyman, who has published many very esteemed works on the origin and the history of the aborigines of our America, has arrived recently in this capital, where he plans to spend some time collecting certain data in the libraries, to study some one or more of the Indian tongues and to make other investigations of this nature. We already have had the pleasure of reading one of the most outstanding works of the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, and we are pleased to have among us today a person of his knowledge and literary reputation.<sup>31</sup>

The Gazette later reported the departure of Brasseur to take a parish in the town of Rabinal in the Department of Verapaz to study the Indian language, customs, and traditions for his complete work on the aborigines of the continent. On page 4, a letter from Brasseur to editor Milla, written May 14, 1855, was reproduced, thanking the people of Guatemala for their cordiality and help during his studies in Guatemala City.<sup>32</sup> This cordial reception and friendly aid for travelers--scientists, students, and diplomats--has been a longtime tradition in Guatemala.

Stimulated by the presence and by the scholarly example of the French priest, Milla lost no opportunity to use Brasseur as a worthy lesson to Guatemalans of their need for such "studies." Milla knew the didactic value of a newspaper policy to develop public interest, and he again proved his awareness of the value of documents and, in this case,

of American prehistory. In July 1855, he inserted the following statement in the Gazette:

Guatemalan Antiquities.--Today, we begin to insert an interesting letter from the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, which contains some details of his trip to Verapaz and the description of two ancient, ruined cities that he has visited in that department. The remains of Cakyu and Tsak Pokoma in the wilderness of Verapaz might have remained ignored for some time to come if it were not for the laborious investigations of the erudite writer who is today enriching his works on American archeology and ethnography by this animated story. We recommend the reading of this beautiful letter, which we feel sure will gain the attention of those intelligent persons who have a liking for this kind of studies, both within and without the country.<sup>33</sup>

The letter by Brasseur was published in that same issue and in the one following, and in its context Brasseur complimented Milla for his own "love of the sciences and the arts."<sup>34</sup>

Along with his attention to the need for a greater amount of study and writing on national phenomena, Milla also displayed some continuing interest in poetry. His friend, the Liberal poet Juan Diéguez--the "personal enemy" of Rafael Carrera<sup>35</sup>--was living in exile at Comitán, Mexico, and Milla sent him a poem dated February 2, 1854. These two maintained contact after Carrera's government exiled Diéguez in 1846, with Milla undoubtedly risking the wrath of the caudillo he served should this irritate Carrera in any way. The poem was not particularly good poetry, although a contemporary critic called the work of "the bard" a "beautiful poetical composition,"<sup>36</sup> but it again demonstrated that Milla was an excellent critic of literature. It urged Diéguez to continue to paint the grandeur of American nature, and, in good romantic flavor, the poem began,

You, who once painted the placid summer  
with colors divine and magic brush,

are painting the glories of the American sky,  
 may its beauteous hues be lent your stroke...  
 Paint, depict, sing; harp, chisel and pen,  
 Now in your hand I see, with faith, enthusiasm...<sup>37</sup>

In urging Diéguez to write of the wonders of the Guatemalan landscape, advice upon which the poet did actually act with a result which made literary history, Pepe Milla displayed his determination to be a positive force in the development of the art and history and literature of his native land. This was just another of the examples of his same determination to create something positive and lasting from his own writing and from his journalistic efforts. It was not the outlook of a conservative holding desperately to the static existence of a status quo. It was a creative, dynamic, positive, and often liberal, almost always moderate, approach to life. Milla must be credited with this attribute.

Turning now to some of the political, economic, and social phenomena reflected in the pages of the Gazette, whose articles and editorials fell to the responsibility of editor-in-chief Milla, the trends followed by a conservative nineteenth-century government could clearly be seen. From 1849 to 1855, Rafael Carrera rose from caudillo-leader to supreme ruler of Guatemala, and in his wake José Milla enjoyed a comparable rise in political power and social prominence, but at a much lower level. After August 8, 1849, with the return of Carrera to military supremacy under President Mariano Paredes, the Conservatives were firmly entrenched in control of the civil processes of Guatemala. Carrera defeated the forces of Salvador and Honduras in the decisive battle of Arada, February 2, 1851, in a war with those two states. For

the Conservatives, he represented the hub of conservative ideals, a unifying force in society, and above all, the man to maintain a regular and stable government.<sup>39</sup> And, they held him to be a very important force in all Central American politics as well.

By May of that same year, the Gazette was able to report the "Pacification of the Mountainous Region," which marked the end of three years of civil strife. Public gratitude went out to Carrera, the government, and the functionaries who conducted the military campaigns.<sup>40</sup> With peace restored at home and abroad, Mariano Paredes called back the constituent assembly on August 16, and by October 19, 1851, a constitution was adopted at last. This was the first constitution under the republic, for the only previous fundamental law had been that of the State of Guatemala of October 11, 1825, under the United Provinces federation. It was entitled Acta Constitutiva de la República de Guatemala, and it and it lasted for over twenty-eight years until replaced by a Liberal constitution in 1879.<sup>41</sup>

That Conservative constitution supplied a basic law for the land after twelve years of bitter wrangling over the question of constitutional rights. However, its provisions were designed to accommodate the Conservatives and to create an absolute control of government by the presidency. The final article provided effectively for control by Carrera, for the assembly reserved to itself the choice of a new executive for the term January 1, 1852, to January 1, 1856. The Gazette explained that the dominant idea of the Act was to fortify the power of the government which had been weakened by the prolonged civil strife.

The days of liberty, liberalism, and decentralization were ended.

The establishment of a new order of things, whose base will be truth and whose primary concern will be to strive for the harmony of institutions with customs, with the needs and the times, a step of the greatest significance, one by virtue of which Guatemala will count with a certain stability after 30 years of upheavals and uncertainty.<sup>42</sup>

Certain features of the law suffice to indicate its general nature. The Archbishop was to swear in the executive, being empowered for the occasion to preside over the house of representatives, so the Church was again on the ascendency in civil affairs. The president had such absolute powers as declaring war, making peace, ratifying treaties, and raising loans. Appointive officers, ministers, and councilor, were in line to receive the presidency before it devolved upon popularly elected deputies. The president had the right to call for advice and admit to a vote such functionaries as the archbishop, visiting bishops, leader of the supreme court, the rector of the University, the prior of the consulado, or commercial court, the president of the Economic Society, and the military commandant. Fifty-five deputies made up the Chamber of Deputies, but the real power to legislate was so centralized in the president and his appointees that these deputies seemed powerless to do anything but approve executive measures.<sup>43</sup>

Rafael Carrera was chosen president by the constituent assembly, assuming office January 1, 1852, for the term ending in 1856. Before the appointed period was at an end, however, on October 21, 1854, he was proclaimed president for life by an elaborate "public" acclamation. Meetings were held in the 19 departments, and a recorded 2,361 votes were cast in 255 municipalities proclaiming Carrera president in perpe-



tuity.<sup>44</sup> This was scarcely to be considered a civil act in view of the fact that the voters were military officials, government employees, and parish priests. However, the real blow was the empowering of Carrera to choose his own successor.<sup>45</sup> But, as the Gazette pointed out, "the declaration of the exercising of perpetual authority by General Carrera is a consummate act,"<sup>46</sup> and the opposition can do nothing about it. The paper described the ceremony of October 21, with the three days of festivities it entailed, and then the Cámara de Representantes ("Chamber of Representatives"), acting on the juntas celebrated in the departments, signed into law the final Act on December 15, 1854.

The same Chamber of Representatives carried the centralization of the executive one step further in the following month. On January 29, 1855, it signed an act exempting the president from responsibility for the acts of the government, placing this responsibility on his ministers.<sup>47</sup> Included in this final act in the absolute government created for Carrera were still broader personal powers: to create honorary distinctions to reward outstanding merit and virtue; to initiate laws; to name the Council of State; to suspend or defer the Chamber sessions (with the approval of the Council of State appointed by him); and, to name magistrates and justices to fill judicial posts falling vacant. The deputies and the Council were authorized for seven- instead of four-year terms,<sup>48</sup> and Carrera's power seemed indeed supreme. However, a revolt in Quetzaltenango nearly deposed him in 1856, but it was put under control early in the year to leave a "stable" government at last, after a period of constant civil strife since the decade of the 1830's.

## Milla's Role as Conservative Bard, 1849-1856

How did the Gazette participate in the building up of Carrera to supreme power? A whole series of editorials appeared in 1850 designed to impress upon the reading public that strongman leadership would be the one certain escape from the anarchy of the years since independence. Since Mariano Paredes was still president, Carrera was not mentioned by name. With but one stable, strong leader in the country, however, he did not need to be called by name as the only man to fill the office. Discussing "The Press and Public Writing," an editorial said that:

Among us, more than any other thing, the mission of the press is not to proclaim anarchical concepts nor dangerous theories on the present state of our society; the task of the public writer, at least as we see it, is very simple: it is reduced to disseminating in the people religious principles as the only basis for every political organization, as an indispensable condition for existence; to inculcate obedience to authority, the love of work, respect for others; to bring about an understanding of in what consists progress and true betterment of the people, and what are the governmental procedures which offer the greatest conditions of stability. . . . In a country in which the cultured people find themselves constantly menaced by death at the hands of savages; in a society in which the mass of the population is submerged in the most frightful barbarism; in which religious sentiments and scanty notions of morality which were previously held are being lost; it would be a sad error, if not a criminal imprudence, to propagate audacious concepts which so harm populations a thousand times more civilized than ours.<sup>49</sup>

Guatemalan government was now going to move in the direction of military control, religious instruction, and an elite society which would do little to solve the problem of its savage "masses."

Subsequent editorials merely reiterated this position. "On Strong Government," the editorial concluded by saying, "we make no apology for de facto governments; we have only wanted to show that they are a necessary consequence arising out of disorder and anarchy."<sup>50</sup> Editorializing on "Deeds Not Doctrines," the editors pointed out that all

too often social theories break down before social conditions, and that the Conservatives did not intend to be deceived by false doctrines. Or, on "Subversive Writings," the iron glove showed through in the out-and-out threat that, "if there are persons so imprudent as to send ill-disguised writings out of Guatemala [for printing]; and, if those in exile in San Salvador accuse their confederates of ideas, they have only themselves to blame for the ills that will befall them for their lack of foresight."<sup>51</sup> And, finally, the "Political Doctrines of the Gazette" listed "the conservative maxims of peace and order, religion and morality, of property and a regular mode of life found to a large degree in civilized peoples in the world."<sup>52</sup>

After Carrera became president in 1852, and the deputies wished to elevate him to perpetual office in 1854, these earlier concepts of stability through centralized power continued. Any attempt to develop popular participation in public affairs was increasingly frowned upon, and a contrived legality took its place. In speaking of "Public Spirit," the Gazette itself put forth a doctrine that certainly contradicted its previous stand on the denunciations of the savage masses of Guatemala. Now,

To create and develop public spirit is one of the main duties of an intelligent government, which attempts every undertaking that may be of use to the general good. With exquisite tact it seeks the participation of society in serious and important cases, not to show weakness nor to abuse, but rather to count with a support as honorable to what it asks as to what it gives, and as useful to the government as to the governed.<sup>53</sup>

The alternative to strong government was anarchy under more moderate systems, and this was equated with "the absurd dogma of the

sovereignty of the people. . . .<sup>54</sup> Therefore, the "Situation" of Guatemala, hinted the Gazette with obvious satisfaction, was that of a maternalistic kind of "tyranny" for the general good:

It is true that in Guatemala there is no freedom of the press; that is to say, the printing of publications of circumstances destined to arouse passion and to give a very sad idea of the civilization of the country, for which purpose the free Central America press generally serves is not permitted. It is true that electoral acts are infrequent, for they are truly a fiction of political immorality; it is true that this is frankly recognized and not merely achieved behind the skirts of little assemblies of people with no respectability nor with public conscience; it is true, in fact, that the opinion of a few ambitious men is not taken as a sign of the general opinion. If all this is called tyranny, tyranny is today, without any doubt, among us.<sup>55</sup>

The Carrera regime was more and more dedicated to the idea that authority was an emanation from God,<sup>56</sup> with the consequent result that the Church became once again entrenched in the country. By government decree Number 58, of June 7, 1851, signed by President Paredes, the Company of Jesus was reestablished perpetually in Guatemala. The Jesuits were authorized to build necessary schools and buildings to exercise their holy offices, and to bring in priests under the protection of the government.<sup>57</sup> On October 7, 1852, the Carrera regime negotiated the first concordat of any Latin American republic with the Vatican, under Pius IX, thus regulating Church-State relations in Guatemala. Within three years, the Church was again achieving privileges in strategic places. In 1854, the Archbishop began to meet with President Carrera to speak of matters related to the University. The President was known to want to re-establish Latin studies, as well as a chair of ecclesiastical sciences.<sup>58</sup>

At the time, government aid to the University amounted to 4,000

pesos a year,<sup>59</sup> and through that financial support, the government and the churchmen interested in university reform moved in on that institution. By 1855, a reform of studies was achieved in 41 articles signed by Carrera on September 22.<sup>60</sup> Rehabilitation of religious study was the prime concern, along with the study of Latinity, and, in

solidity of instruction; sane principles; decorum and formality at literary meetings; punctuality and eagerness in professors and students; here you have, in our judgment, the main and indispensable principles upon which to form the University of Guatemala as it ought to be. . . .

Thus, religious sentiment and true civilization became synonymous, and the Gazette urged for "good religious and moral principles, as bases of order and, especially, of indispensable conditions for well-being and prosperity, both private and social."<sup>61</sup> Milla had by this time returned solidly to the principles under which he had been tutored in childhood under the guidance of Father Castilla. The heady excitement of the liberalism of the 1830's under Dr. Gálvez had worn off for good.

For his support of Rafael Carrera and the Conservative cause, José Milla enjoyed a number of rewards in the form of public office, a political position of respect, and very pleasant social standing in these years of the political comeback of his party. His positions as Secretary to the Consultative Council, Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations, and his editorship of the Gazette, all three regained in September, 1849, have already been described. In addition to these posts, Milla served a variety of other offices from 1849 until 1856. On July 27, 1850, Milla was temporarily accorded the post of Chief Clerk of Government,<sup>62</sup> a position he resigned in September of the same year.<sup>63</sup>



In October, 1850, Milla was removed from his secretaryship of the Economic Society by vote in a regular session of that body. He had held that post for four years when he lost out in the voting.<sup>64</sup> The Economic Society had not held a public meeting since May, 1847, due to the vicissitudes of the civil wars and other political setbacks suffered by Guatemala between 1847 and 1849,<sup>65</sup> and also it will be recalled that the Review ceased publication in that same month. Therefore, José Milla had not really served the Economic Society, except during his first year when he was a secretary to the society and assistant to Pavón in editing the Review. In his memoir written May 19, 1850, Milla's displeasure with the disruption of the activities of the society by the political anarchy clearly show why he preferred the "stability" of a Carrera to the "freedom" of the Liberal Party.

Milla also was elected to the Chamber of Representatives a number of times in his active political years from 1851 until 1871. In 1851, he was the representative for the Department of Huehuetenango,<sup>66</sup> taking his seat among the deputies of the Constituent Assembly seated in July.<sup>67</sup> The session that year opened on August 16, 1851, and it was this body of thirty-one deputies that legislated the first constitution of the republican period in Guatemala. In October, the Assembly decided on the form of the ceremony for swearing in deputies, as well as the project for the election of President of the republic, Milla serving with the steering committee for that project.<sup>68</sup> He signed the Acta Constitutiva that month as the representative from Huehuetenango.<sup>69</sup>

As a deputy, his service in the Chamber of Representatives con-

timed for the years 1852 to 1856, being modified to a seven-year term in the constitutional reforms of 1854, previously mentioned in this chapter. On October 21, 1854, Milla, for example, signed the proclamation of Carrera as supreme chief for life under the title, "Representative and Chief Clerk of the Ministry of Relations."<sup>70</sup>

In the second chapter of this study, it was shown that the Milla family origins were quite definitely upper class. The family was distinguished socially as an outgrowth of colonial political reforms under the intendency system after 1790. Certainly, the rise of his father, José Justo Milla, as a military chief of the conservative faction in the federation was to high office. Now, José Milla also belonged to the aristocratic branch of the Conservative party, but he never served the military with active military duty. A Gazette editorial published in September 1849, a month after Milla resumed the editorial post of the paper, shed light on Milla's nationalization of his own social position.

The editorial was on "Aristocracy," and it contained the following interesting comments:

Who are the aristocrats in Central America? Where are those who enjoy or pretend privileges?

We shall explain it, yes. The aristocrats in Central America are all those who, without exception, are distinguished for their richness, their talents, their good conduct, and their social position. Here are the ones who form up the aristocracy. Here are the ones who have an option on offices, the ones who are and have been filling them, without anyone ever asking who their grandparents were. Are the charges which we hear so frequently directed, by chance, to these persons? It is pretended that they are to be done away with, thus destroying all superiority, abolishing legitimate privileges of virtue, work, and genius, condemning society to be unable to rise from a lowly level? Do it. But, don't lose sight of the fact that if you should succeed (which is scarcely to be expected since these

charges are received with disdain by all), if you should succeed, we say, the destruction of that which today is called aristocracy, the most prominent individuals who later should be at the head of the people, would be, like the Girondists in France, in their turn accused of being aristocrats, and as such condemned to suffer the same fortune that they had inflicted on their predecessors.<sup>71</sup>

Milla's superior literary talents and good party conduct located him with the "aristocracy," as defined here. His was, therefore, an aristocracy based on literary genius and the application of that genius to the Conservative Party cause, and he was, therefore, entitled to exact the privileges which were to be his for his virtue, work, and genius. Still, as one reads of Milla and his rise in the Guatemalan political world, there is never any evidence that he actually did enjoy the privileges of traditional aristocracy as this editorial attempts to depict for Guatemala at mid-century. Milla became politically and socially powerful, but he never really did more than associate socially with the Batreses, Pavóns, and Aycinenas. His was a fringe-relationship to the traditionally elite families, despite any offices or honors he ever held in that society. The presidency of important social societies, the leadership of government commissions, the high priority of seating arrangements at banquets and ceremonies still went to the elite, with Milla seated or appointed to positions adjacent to the center of the stage and usually as secretary where his writing and oratory skill was put into use. It is doubtful that any such modification of the basic tenet of Guatemalan aristocracy--that of traditional family position--has ever really occurred down to the present. Scarcely anyone ever became, or becomes, a member of the inner elite of Guatemalan society as a first-generation immigrant, or by marriage, or at times until a

second- or third-generation respectability has been attained. Milla was, after all, of Honduran origins in the eyes of those men whose families had administered the colonial Spanish offices in Guatemala City. They had participated in the movement for political emancipation from royal control before Milla was born. But, it spoke very well for his literary ability that it carried him to the heights to which he rose.

Perhaps indicative of this relationship of Milla's literary adroitness and his position within the Conservative Party was best shown in his early establishment in the role of "bard" of the Party. On September 15, 1850, the twenty-ninth anniversary of independence was celebrated with a state banquet in the capital city, and the description in the Gazette of that colorful and animated event was as fine a document of social history as one can find.<sup>72</sup> Milla was in all probability the author of that unsigned editorial, although his own part in the festivities was related in the third person.

That subscription banquet was planned for Independence Day by over seventy of Guatemala's notables. With the addition of guests from Guatemala and from abroad, the total reached into the eighties. The location for the state banquet was the "Varieties" restaurant, owned by Julián Rivera, and, at the appointed hour of six in the afternoon, the participants began to arrive. Passing inside, they found two long tables set parallel in the middle of the dining hall. At one end, a shorter table joined the two longer ones together to form a head table and complete the horseshoe arrangement which was reported to be ". . . the same that is customary in Europe, in the United States, and elsewhere for gatherings of this kind. . . ."

The national colors, celestial blue and white, were the dominant motif, and national flags adorned the windows and columns of the hall, with the flags being crossed in pairs and located on the columns one pair above the other clear to the ceiling of the room. The linen flags were joined at the bottom hems to form a pavillion-like frame above the two rows of tables. At one side, there was a great curtain of blue and white, while artificial flowers of the same colors adorned four or five huge ceiling lamps. About the entire room, artificial flowers and candelabra, all with the national colors prominently displayed, completed the gala atmosphere. The pièce d'occasion was a painting by Mr. Rivera. It was a kind of diorama, illuminated from behind, to highlight the beautiful colors which depicted an angel, symbolizing Guatemala, pointing to the emblem of the Republic inscribed "September 15, 1821," and, below, "March 21, 1847."

At six in the afternoon, the participants began to gather, and at six-thirty the music of the Second Line Battalion band provided entertainment until, a little after seven, a bell summoned the group to the banquet. National ministers, councillors of state, supreme court justices, lesser governmental employees, departmental and municipal political leaders were in attendance. An orchestra, which was present to vie with the military band for the appreciation of the guests, paused for a moment of silence. Then, the toastmaster opened the festivity with, "For the twenty-ninth anniversary of Independence; and, for the prosperity and aggrandizement of the Republic," and the function was under way to the strains of martial music and the frequent, spontaneous,



"Viva la República!" of functionary and politician.

José Milla, seated well away from the head of the table with the federal employees and municipal officers, rose at one point to toast, ". . . the foreign nations which have celebrated treaties with the Republic [and for] their relations which are greatly useful for augmenting civilization and lending impulse to agriculture, the arts, and commerce,"<sup>73</sup> and other toasts feted President Paredes; General Carrera; the peace, prosperity, and union of Central America; the Spanish nation;<sup>74</sup> the Constituent Assembly, which in 1848 ratified the Carrera decree of the Republic; and, the fine arts and their development in Guatemala. "The greatest animation and the frankest of pleasure reigned over all the participants . . .", and, why not, for Conservative control over the processes of government was emerging unchallenged in September 1850, after over a decade of civil strife and annoying liberal opposition.

The toastmaster and many guests urged Don Pepe Milla to offer a toast in verse, as was the custom at that time in such banquets, and the Conservative bard improvised the following stanza for the occasion:

For such a singular distinction,  
I thank you, gentlemen;  
but, since I am not worthy, then  
permit me to demur.  
In fact, nothing should be easier  
than in this group to find  
a troubadour of impromptu mind,  
who could command a witty style,  
far more than mine worth the while,  
as a skillful improviser.

In such a brilliant gathering,  
who would not be led sublime,  
to seek and find a facile rhyme  
out of sudden inspiration?  
In my heart I feel sensation  
of origin divine, wit and prescience,

and no small measure of eloquence  
reflecting what in this hall so gala  
today is toasted to Guatemala  
her glory and her Independence!!!

In the course of the evening, there were other toasts in verse, but the Gazette did not report any of them in its account of the festivities. The group remained in the restaurant until midnight, at which time a large part of the revelers left the banquet hall, accompanied by the military band, and went off down the street toward the homes of President Paredes and General Carrera, playing a few numbers in the street. The consensus of opinion was that theirs was undoubtedly one of the most pleasant and brilliant state gatherings of any ever held in Guatemala.

Five years later, editorializing on the theme of "September Fifteenth" of 1855, the Gazette could in effect confirm the feeling of that banquet group of 1850 that the Conservative era was destined to achieve a stable and solid political control under Carrera. The editorial intoned the following description of the perpetual presidency of Carrera:

Respect for religion, obedience to authority, moral and material betterment, seeing eye to eye with friendly governments, protection of property, effective guarantees for the citizenry, firm belief in conservative concepts: here you have in our understanding represented by General Carrera, incarnate in him who has made of them, by means of practical, daily application, fundamental truths on which our present way of life rests.<sup>75</sup>

In the period from 1849 until 1856, Rafael Carrera, the "sacred caudillo of the people," had returned to Guatemala from banishment to become president for life. With Carrera's rise to absolute power, the Conservative bard, Pepe Milla, found his own star on the rise because he wielded the outstanding pen of the party in power.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 554-555. Martínez was given to rest and tranquil living. He was surrounded by rich merchants, and they spent their time discussing the fortunes of cochineal and indigo, the European market, and the imports to be brought to Guatemala. They were not accustomed to discuss political ideology nor ways and means to improve Guatemala.

<sup>2</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 273-274.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 270.

<sup>4</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, September 14, 1848, p. 94.

<sup>5</sup>García Granados, op. cit., p. 123.

<sup>6</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 275.

<sup>7</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 569.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 746-747. Juan Diéguez, Milla's friend, figured in the letter which was dated January 24, 1849, for Carrera gave as his reasons for returning the fact that the government had insulted him during Martínez' regime and that Diéguez, his "personal enemy," had denounced him before the nations of the world in the Chiapas press.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 793-794.

<sup>10</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, February 24, 1848, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Montúfar, Reseña histórica, V, 768.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 278-279.

<sup>13</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, September 27, 1849, p. 319.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., July 25, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1847, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., March 31, 1848, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., April 11, 1851, pp. 2-4.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., June 13, 1851, pp. 2-3.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., July 4, 1851, pp. 2-3.

<sup>21</sup>"El sr. d. Mariano Aycinena. (Noticia biográfica)." Gaceta de Guatemala, January 26, 1855, pp. 4-5; "El sr. don Felipe Molina. (Noticia biográfica)," Ibid., April 20, 1855, pp. 3-4; "El sr. don Manuel F. Pavón. (Noticia biográfica)," Ibid., May 30, 1855, pp. 2-4; June 1, 1855, pp. 1-4; June 6, 1855, pp. 2-4; June 9, 1855, pp. 1-4; and June 14, 1855, pp. 1-3.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1855, pp. 4-5.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., April 19, 1855, pp. 2-3 and May 30, 1855, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., December 6, 1849, p. 362.

<sup>25</sup>Winifred Gregory (ed.), Union list of serials in Libraries of the United States and Canada (2d ed.: New York, 1943), p. 785.

<sup>26</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, May 5, 1854, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., May 4, 1855, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1850, p. 381.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., May 4, 1855, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1855, pp. 5-6.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., February 9, 1855, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., May 18, 1855, pp. 3f.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1855, p. 5.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>See footnote 8 above.

<sup>36</sup>Agustín Gómez Carrillo, "La Galería Poética Centro-Americana, artículo segundo," Revista de la Universidad de Guatemala, I (June 1, 1877), 13. This author errs in his otherwise interesting commentary by placing the date at 1855. César Brañas, op. cit., pp. 133-134, bears out the accuracy of Vela, op. cit., II, 195.

<sup>37</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 195-196. The entire poem is reproduced here, but only a fragment was cited by Gómez Carrillo in his article mentioned above.

<sup>38</sup>See Brañas, op. cit., p. 133, for his view of the difficulty of establishing the authorship of journalistic writings. Milla's chief assistant on the Gazette was J. H. Taracena, who undoubtedly wrote much of the copy. Normally, the editorials were not signed or marked by initials, with the result that it is difficult, if not impossible, to assign this or that editorial to Milla. At times, as with the Brasseur letters to the editor, there is a clearcut indication that Milla was involved. The position adopted in this study is that in the last analysis Milla was responsible for the editorials, and they, therefore, reflect his general attitude. When editorials or other news items are cited

herein, the assumption will be that Milla wrote them or agreed with them.

<sup>39</sup>"Triunfo moral de Guatemala," Gaceta de Guatemala, March 28, 1851, pp. 1-2.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., May 30, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Russell H. Fitzgibbon (ed.), The Constitutions of the Americas (Chicago, 1948), p. 397.

<sup>42</sup>"El acta constitutiva," Gaceta de Guatemala, October 17, 1851, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 281-282. The eighteen major provisions of the 1851 constitution are summarized here.

<sup>44</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, August 11, 1854, p. 3.

<sup>45</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 282.

<sup>46</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, September 22, 1854, pp. 3-4.

<sup>47</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 282.

<sup>48</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, April 13, 1855, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., May 16, 1850, pp. 381-382.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., July 5, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., August 30, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., September 13, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., May 19, 1854, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., July 9, 1854, pp. 6-7.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., November 17, 1854, p. 5.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., July 9, 1864, pp. 6-7.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., June 13, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1854, p. 7.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., January 12, 1855, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1855, pp. 1-3. This lists the forty-one articles in the "Decree of reforms in the Statutes of the National and



Pontifical University of San Carlos of Guatemala."

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1855, pp. 4-5.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., September 19, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., November 1, 1850, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup>Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, Memoria que presentó a la Sociedad Económica en la junta general celebrada el 19 de mayo de 1850, su secretario D. José Milla. . . , p. 1.

<sup>66</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, July 19, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1851, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., October 17, 1851, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., October 25, 1851, pp. 1-2.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1854, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., October 18, 1849, pp. 332-333.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., September 19, 1850, pp. 2-3.

<sup>73</sup>Mancroft, op. cit., III, 270. By this date, France (March 8, 1848), Costa Rica (March 10, 1848), Great Britain (February 20, 1849), the United States (March 20, 1849), and Belgium (April, 1849) had recognized the republic.

<sup>74</sup>José López Oliván, Repertorio diplomático español (Madrid, 1944), p. 138. Spain recognized Guatemalan independence in a treaty signed at Madrid on May 29, 1863.

<sup>75</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, September 14, 1855, pp. 3-4.

## CHAPTER V

JOSE MILLA AND OCTAVIAN PEACE IN CENTRAL AMERICA, 1856-1864

Nothing new in public life. We continue in Octavian peace. . . .  
José Milla

### Milla's Rise to Counsellor of State in 1864

After 1856, with its power firmly consolidated in the leadership of Rafael Carrera, the Republic of Guatemala entered upon a relatively "stable" stage of the Thirty-Year Regime, lasting until 1871. This Conservative period has, however, been classified as "a period of absolutism and reaction like few others in the history of American states."<sup>1</sup> National independence was a basic objective of the Carrera government, and all energy was directed to achieving that end, with frequent recourse to intrigue and even to war to oppose the pressures brought to bear for a union of the Isthmian states. In 1856, against Honduras, and, in 1863, against El Salvador, Guatemala emerged victorious from brief armed conflicts. However, for the most part, Guatemala played the role of paterfamilias of the Central American house, or, as Milla wrote in 1861, "all is tranquil, and our Republic has continued to approach sisters and neighbors like a tata (papa) who takes care to maintain domestic discipline in his mischievous offspring."<sup>2</sup>

After so many years of local and international warfare, the one-man power of Rafael Carrera in Central America was a period of welcome

relief from debilitating strife and tensions. Speaking of this, Milla said: "Nothing new in public life. We continue in Octavian peace. . . ." In the first years of that stable Conservative period, from 1856 until 1864, of which the present chapter treats, the Carrera regime was busily occupied in politics as usual. Consequently, José Milla, as a dedicated public figure, was mainly busy with political matters. In the following period from 1865 until 1871, Milla was to be freer of politics and better able to turn wholeheartedly to his literary career. Again, enabled by domestic tranquility and his governmental posts to devote his attention to literature, Milla's productive years in the decade of the 1860's were a direct consequence of his relationship with the Conservative regime in politics.

José Milla continued steadily to ascend the political hierarchy. After 1856, he remained a member of the Chamber of Deputies, and he continued in his office as Chief Clerk of the Ministry of Foreign Relations until the year 1859. In that year it appears that the government was willing to invoke a sixteen-year-old decree—that of December 15, 1843, creating the position of Subsecretary of State. The post was conceived of as an intermediate one subordinate to the government ministers, but directly over the various ministry offices. In the absence of a minister, the Subsecretary of State had the the temporary power of Minister, and his duties normally would be to act as an auxiliary force to bring about a better functioning of the ministries. The salary for such a functionary was 1,000 pesos a year, and a decree of June 30, 1859, authorized Milla as Subsecretary of State to exercise the aforementioned functions at that

salary. He also continued in his post as Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations. As a result of that appointment by presidential decree, Milla was also invited to attend the sessions of the Council of State and to have a vote in the matters under consideration there. He was getting near the top of the political ladder.

When Milla wrote Luis Molina, his wife's uncle, of the appointment in a letter dated October 23, 1859, he had the following to say:

It is true that, in my capacity as Chief Clerk of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, I was Subsecretary of that Ministry; hence, the appointment that was given me last July was that of Subsecretary General, with the responsibility of the three secretariats, according to a Decree of the year 1842, which you will see in the Gazette, which published my appointment. The salary that I have now is 1,300 pesos a year, which, although not very fat, because of the state of affairs, does give me the wherewithal to live with some decency. Here, by a decree of I don't know what date, anyone who has two offices carries only the better salary of the two posts; so it is that I have the pay of Subsecretary General, and, in addition, a gratification from the Gazette. Neither you nor I, boy, will get rich from the public service.<sup>7</sup>

From this letter, it can be seen that Milla earned perhaps a little over 1,300 pesos a year in 1859 for his government service and his journalistic activities. That was not a large remuneration at that time, but he seemed content enough with his lot. The letters such as that one, written to Molina in Washington, formed an excellent source for a study of Milla in the era from 1859 to 1863. At the time of his appointment to the new post, Milla's letters to Molina reflected that he felt his powerful position as editor of the Gazette as an outlet for the official viewpoint of the Carrera government. In a letter of August 23, 1859, he wrote Molina:

Today, I am writing Tassara, care of Irisarri, in order to avoid loading you down with the mailing of the letter--which is pretty

thick, since I am sending him a hundred pounds of copy I wrote for the Gazette on treaties with Spain. I suppose that you are getting the Gazette since I have told them to send it to you. Look over Number 17 and 27 of July and 4 and 11 of August, in which these articles are found, and tell me your judgement of them. It is a subject which merits more extensive treatment and a greater expenditure of time than the writer has been able to give it.

If you find that it can be useful to insert in the Crónica of New York, so that in Havana and elsewhere the ideas of the government of Guatemala with regard to treaties with Spain can be seen, do me the favor if Mr. Peña wants to use the articles, and please give him my regards.<sup>8</sup>

He referred to Gabriel García y Tassara, Minister of Spain to the United States,<sup>9</sup> and clearly showed his feeling that his own pen reflected official Guatemalan dogma of the day. Peña was editor of the Crónica.

While he felt he spoke for the government, in the entire body of personal letters written between 1859 and 1863, Milla did not indicate any truly intimate relationship to President Carrera. He spoke with him, worked for him, and showed his respect for that leader, but no indication of a close association or intimate friendship appeared in remarks from the many letters written to Luis Molina. In the same letter of August 23, Milla referred to information which Molina sent to Carrera through Milla: "I am replying to yours of July 4, which I received along with the data on the metal-milling machine, for which I thank you a lot, and the President also thanked you and told me he is going to think about what he will do in the matter." That was the only reference to Carrera in the letters. In lieu of evidence unknown by this writer, that supported the accepted assumption that Carrera associated with the aristocratic branch of his party, but never really trusted them intimately, even over the thirty-odd years of his regime.<sup>10</sup> It was also a corollary to the assumption that Milla's was a fringe relationship to the controlling elements--the



aristocratic elite and the military authority--in the Conservative ranks.

José Milla in the United States, 1858-1859

The initial step of greatest significance to Milla in the years from 1856 until 1864 came with his appointment to a special official mission to Washington to report to the Guatemalan ambassador there, Antonio José de Irisarri, one of the influential foreign diplomats in Washington at that time. That was Milla's first trip outside his native country,<sup>11</sup> and on the trip he renewed his friendship with Luis Molina, at that time Minister of Costa Rica in Washington. Molina had fled Guatemala in 1849, along with other leading Liberals and his own Moderates, the party he had founded. Both groups had fled the vengeance of Rafael Carrera, who reappeared on the political horizon that year. Molina lived in Nicaragua until he also fled that country in 1854,<sup>12</sup> choosing the very path of political exile which José Milla had sidestepped when he became a Carrera supporter after 1845. In New York and Washington, Milla also met a number of other Americans and foreign residents whose friendship led to interesting events in his life in the following years. Milla's letters to Molina following Milla's return to Guatemala formed the only large body of correspondence available for a study of Milla, and these letters contained a wealth of background information on Central American public events and on the personalities involved in them. Political outlook was the greatest preoccupation Milla showed in the letters, while social events, current economic problems, and his own family news and modest literary activities were touched upon lightly.

José Milla left Guatemala for New York on October 24, 1858, with

the official position of Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations,<sup>13</sup> embarking on the American steamship "Columbus," bound for New York via the Central American Pacific ports and Panama. The next five months were happy ones for Milla, who divided his time between New York and Washington, busying himself with his mission, enjoying the social contacts he made, and seeing as much as he could of the life of those two cities. His letters during the next four years constantly referred back to events of this trip which continued to provide him with valuable friendships and with personal stimulation.<sup>15</sup>

December must have been a lively and exciting month for the Guatemalan visitor in Washington. The Gazette reported some of his most newsworthy activities to its Guatemalan readers: "On the 21st, Mr. Milla was introduced to His Excellency General [Lewis] Cass, and on the 22nd he visited several of the members of the foreign diplomatic corps in Washington."<sup>16</sup> General Cass, soldier, diplomat, and statesman, was at the apex of his long career at the time in the position of Secretary of State in the administration of President James Buchanan.<sup>17</sup> The following day, December 22, José Milla y Vidaurre was presented to the president of the United States by General Pedro Alcántara Herrán, Colombian Minister in Washington who made the introduction in place of Minister Antonio José de Irisarri. That was a high level reception for the thirty-six-year-old Milla, then but a Chief Clerk in the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Relations.

The Gazette reported on February 1, 1859, that Mr. Milla said to His Excellency the President:

. . . that having come to the United States with a Government commission, he had made it a duty to come to present his respects to His Excellency. That his position in the Government of Guatemala put him in a position to know the friendly sentiment that His Excellency Captain-General and President of the Republic, and the other men making up the administration, felt toward the United States and toward the distinguished Statesman who controlled the destiny of that country. That it was his pleasure to transmit these feelings to him and to be the interpreter of them before His Excellency.<sup>18</sup>

The Democratic president from Pennsylvania, Mr. Buchanan, extended a welcome to Milla on his arrival in the United States, and he encharged him to present his own respects to His Excellency, President Carrera of Guatemala. President Buchanan went on to say that he hoped to continue and to better the friendly relations of the two countries. He ended the interview by wishing Mr. Milla a pleasant residence in the country and by asking him about the state of health of Mr. Irisarri, who had been too ill to travel from his home in Brooklyn to present Milla himself.<sup>19</sup>

A letter that he wrote from New York on February 7, 1859, showed the humor that was to be so prominent in Milla's later sketches of social customs in his own country. He laughed with Molina at the social currents of the day, at the religious movements, and the spiritualism then in vogue, as reported in the pages of the New York Herald. One advertisement of an astrologer especially attracted his attention, for Milla was still a bachelor and, therefore, wondered who his future wife might be:

I have run onto an advertisement with the announcement of an astrologer who divines the name of the future of a gentleman who wishes to consult her, and other things like that. Since the aforesaid sibyl lives near my residence, I plan to go toss out a dollar to learn with whom I finally am going to marry; a matter of which, if this oracle doesn't inform me, I think I shall never come to know in my lifetime.

Not long after his return to Guatemala on March 25, 1859,<sup>20</sup> Milla was to learn the answer to that question at last, although he never again wrote

whether or not the astrologer helped him in his choice of a mate.

### José Milla's Marriage and Family

After Milla's return to Guatemala, the Gazette of July 6, 1859,

carried the following account on page two:

The Illustrious Bishop of Camacao [Doctor José María Barrutia] himself performed the matrimony of the Subsecretary of Government, Chief Clerk of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, don José Milla, with his maternal cousin, Miss Mercedes Vidaurre, on July 2 in the Chapel of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Mr. Pedro de Aycinena, Minister of Foreign Relations, was best man, and Miss Carmen Milla was maid of honor. On the evening of July 4, Mr. Milla gave a dance attended by sixty-six ladies and over one-hundred and twenty gentlemen. His Excellency, the President, was kind enough to honor the function with his attendance, being accompanied by his daughters. The Illustrious Bishop of Camacao also was kind enough to attend for a while, at the beginning of the fiesta. The Ministers of Government, the honorable Minister Resident of the United States [Beverly L. Clarke], the Chargé d'Affaires of France, the Vice-Consul of the British Legation, and many other functionaries attended that party, which was a very lively affair.

Here again was ample evidence of the high social associations which Milla enjoyed, and the decrees of June 30, naming him Subsecretary of Government and arranged by his best man and the president, were undoubtedly connected with the date of this new social status which Milla entered at this time.

His bride was of the same family as Milla's mother, whose given name had also been Mercedes, and Milla had evidently spoken of his future wife to Molina during his trip to the United States prior to their marriage. Mercedes Milla wrote Molina a note two months after the marriage in which she told him:

I have wanted to write you for some time, but something always interferes. Now that I am doing it at last, it is a shame that it is done in haste since I can only tell you hello and repeat what Pepe has already told you. You already know very well that I have always liked you; and, if there is anything that can increase that affection, it is doubtless the friendship that you share with him.

He has already told me of the kind memories you had of me when you were together, and this shows me that I receive from you the same affection that I have had for yourself.

She went on to tell him that she hoped the marriage would bring them closer, and ended with news of Molina's family.<sup>21</sup>

Pepe Milla for his part, was more laconic in his announcement to Molina of the ceremony, saying rather humorously:

By my last letter, you will have seen that, since the beginning of July, I count myself among the formal folk. Pray God that my example will touch your hardened heart and inspire you to a decision to form a happy match with some of the pretty and excellent young chapinas who are available.<sup>22</sup>

A chapina was a young lady of Guatemalan birth, particularly one born in Guatemala City,<sup>23</sup> and Milla's letters contained a good deal of regional language peculiar to the chapín, or native Guatemalan. Milla's later letters left no doubt as to the happiness of their marriage, however, for he repeatedly spoke with great affection of la negra<sup>24</sup> and her devotion to him, as in a letter of December 24, 1859: "I expected no less from the good character of the negra and of her desire, not once varying, of doing everything that could be pleasing to me."

A contemporary of José Milla later wrote of his virtues as a family man, and that was one of the attributes of Milla which has been constantly praised by essayists of the man's life. Their marriage came to be one of the brighter spots in a harried public career. Their home was orderly, harmonious, and filled with sweetness, and Milla carefully maintained an attentive outlook toward his wife, children, and even domestic servants. The Milla children were felt to be outstanding because of the zeal of their father for their intellectual and religious educa-



tion, while he was notably tender and kind to them.<sup>25</sup> Six children were born from that union, but only one of them, Pedro Milla, inherited his father's calling in the newspaper field. Pedro Milla later became editor of the newspaper, La República.<sup>26</sup>

The letters written Luis Molina tell of the birth of the two first children, a boy José Mariano and a girl Ana, and the arrival of the first born was a particularly lively account due to the inexperience of the new father in calculating the birthdate. The child was expected by about May, 1860, according to the letters sent to Molina: "Mercedes continues to add weight daily, and I expect that within a month or month and a half, I can present you with a little servant (servidorcito), or a tiny maid (servidorcita), as they say here; which is just to say, in the manner of Job or of Rene, that there will be one more human to moan and cry in this world."<sup>27</sup>

But, the expected one did not make an appearance, and, with each succeeding letter, an explanation had to be forthcoming. The "little servant" of April became the "promised Messiah" in May and the "apocryphal" in June.<sup>28</sup> By July, Milla could only add, rather lamely, that, "Fortunately, in these matters one can say that, better than in any others, that the mills of the gods grind slowly."<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, his chagrin was obvious, and, when a boy was born on August 18, 1860, Milla's relief, and the return of his usual wry humor, were both evident. He could not resist writing Molina that ". . . if by chance they were not two, he was worth two for he is a strapping boy (muchachón) who very nearly was born with a beard."<sup>30</sup> The second child, a daughter Ana, born

late in October, 1862, arrived with much less fanfare on the part of her father.

On the occasion of the first birthday of José Mariano, Pepe Milla wrote a poem which has since been considered indicative of his exemplary attitude toward his children.<sup>31</sup> Entitled, "To my son on his first birthday," it was dated, August 15, 1861. Although it was reflective of his stature at that time as a poet that Milla's composition was selected to open the literary section in the first issue of the newspaper El Noticioso, no student of the man has pointed out that fact. The editor of the paper stated: "It is our pleasure to open this literary section with the following tender and very beautiful composition by our distinguished friend, don José Milla."<sup>32</sup> While his contemporaries apparently could appreciate the beauty of his lines, Milla himself was not nearly so impressed. He wrote Molina on October 21, 1861, that, "I enclose for you this issue of a newspaper which has begun to be published here under the title El Noticioso, in which some verses which I composed for the first birthday of José have been published. Show them to Tassara, and keep them as a proof that certain bad habits are slowly, if ever, forgotten." Tassara was, of course, the Spanish Minister to Washington, no mean romantic poet himself,<sup>33</sup> who was Milla's acquaintance from his trip to the United States. Tassara liked the poem, as Molina reported later.

Actually, this poem was a rather labored composition varying from romantic phrases on nature and religion to some very sincere and human lines on fatherhood. Milla could speak romantically of his son at one moment as a "candid lily," "loving bird," or "tender palm," and then go

on in rather human tones to exhort him to, "Hear this my voice of sincere affection, / And receive this offer of my fondness, / Which your infant spirit will not comprehend today, / But which some day you will appreciate, my love. /" The poem contained twenty stanzas, partly of four and partly eight lines each, and it debated the virtues of life and bitterness of death. Milla was not sure that his "silent lyre" would respond to the "sweet notes that I ask for you," and, all in all, perhaps Milla was right that poetry was one of his "bad habits" he would best soon forget.

#### Milla Looks at the Central American Scene, 1859-1863

Those were happy years for Milla, with his marriage, his growing family, and his rising personal fortune in politics and society. Nevertheless, his letters to Molina reflected that politics and the current Central American scene were his foremost concern, and those letters afforded a picture of contemporary society, economy, and public life which is too seldom available in any form, whether in diaries, memoirs, or intimate correspondence. In the correspondence there were combined the talents of an excellent writer, a keen observer of contemporary events, and an informed man with a detached and humorous style of narration. The letters as historical documents for the period from 1859 through 1863 afforded a view of the personal outlook of Milla and the Conservatives, as well as an excellent mirror for the times.

When this correspondence began in 1859, Milla was in the United States where he enjoyed the acquaintance of Molina and other diplomats of that "court," as the romantics of mid-century called capital cities. Throughout the years, he continued to recall his friends and their

pleasant times together, sending them his greetings by means of the letters to his uncle-in-law, Luis Molina. One of the names which frequently appeared in his letters was that of Alexander Dimitry, who was a translator in the Department of State in Washington when Milla met him.<sup>34</sup> Dimitry was primarily an educator and public official, like Milla in many ways, but by avocation he was an editor, diplomat, student, and orator. In reading of Dimitry's life, it is apparent that their friendship was an attraction between kindred spirits. Late in 1859, Dimitry accepted the appointment as United States Minister to Nicaragua and Costa Rica,<sup>35</sup> and he continued to correspond with Milla. It was this man, for example, who counseled Milla later on in the matter of bringing a prima donna to Guatemala for the opening of the opera house there.

Another friend to whom Milla frequently turned for criticism on his literary compositions or political writings was Gabriel García y Tassara, already described as the Envoy Extraordinary of His Catholic Majesty (Spain) to the United States, for Milla held that romantic poet and famous Spanish diplomat in high esteem. It was worthy of note that Milla was attracted to a man who, like Milla himself, was a literary figure and a diplomat. That had also been the case with his other acquaintances in Washington, like the Chavalier Bertinatti, at first a diplomatic representative for Sardinia and later minister of the newly formed kingdom of Italy, a flowery personality of the Washington diplomatic corps of that epoch.<sup>36</sup>

He also sent his respects to Gregorio Barandarian, of the Mexican legation, but he evidently felt the superior position of the European

over the American, for he once wrote Molina that "I am pleased that my poor name comes up at times among the canary birds of the Spanish Legation, although it is obvious that it is not heard among the Mexican thrushes."<sup>37</sup> That was an unkind thrust at the Mexicans because Milla used the Mexican name for thrush, senzontle, which, in its vulgar form, meant the jester bird (burlón) which was best known for its ability to imitate to perfection the calls of other birds.<sup>38</sup> But, that was a typical example of the humorous vein in which Milla saw human situations and actions, both in his personal letters and in his literary works.

That small circle of friends was the chosen one of Milla, particularly during the first year after his return from the United States. He scarcely wrote a letter to Molina without mentioning those names and inquiring of them. Through his contact with Molina and probably with the others, although he referred very little in his letters to correspondence with them, Milla was able to keep himself well-informed on international matters.<sup>39</sup> Added to his personal contacts were the newspapers he had access to as editor of the Gazette, as well as the strategic information he learned through his post as Subsecretary of State and Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations. Therefore, it would seem an interesting approach to the Central American scene at that time to view it through Milla's eyes as he penned it in his intimate letters to his uncle.

The filibuster incursions into Central America, particularly under General William Walker, between 1855 and 1860, were not pleasing to Milla and the Central Americans. Milla explained that on his return trip from the United States he had almost had the misfortune of accompanying that



"damned filibuster" aboard the ship the "Golden Age" between Panama and Guatemala. He followed the activities of the filibusters as they gathered in New Orleans in September, 1859, only to be disbanded by United States federal authorities there,<sup>40</sup> and a year later Milla mentioned in a letter of July 6, 1860, that these filibustering elements were again gathering to return to Honduras under Walker. That was the third and last invasion by Walker because the Hondurans, supported by a British warship, placed him before a firing squad on September 12, 1860.

Although Guatemala had not played a leading role in the campaigns against those American adventurers,<sup>41</sup> Milla's pleasure with the fate of Walker was obvious. He wrote Molina that

You will see in the newspapers that the career of Walker has ended as might have been hoped for. Our own Colonel Godoy, who led the small force that left here to go to the aid of Omos /Honduras/, left him the 6th in the death house to be shot the 7th, as far as we know (although not officially yet) Billy has already drunk the waters of the River Styx. We still lack details on the capture, but we do know and, without actually knowing, suppose, that the efficient co-operation of the "Icarus" of His Britannic Majesty's war fleet did a great deal, or entre nous, did everything. The truth is that Walker, already reduced to a handful of men, who had not eaten for 50 hours, could not have held against the 200 or 300 at the command of a general /Mariano/ Alvares of Honduras, to whom the filibusters surrendered. I'll bet the sensational dailies there /in Washington/ will not hesitate to shout to the skies against the "perfidious Albion"; but, what is Walker will no longer say anything, nor will he do anything, which is even better. Our good relations with England have not failed to be useful on this occasion.<sup>42</sup>

Filibusterism was threatened again in 1863 during a war between Guatemala and El Salvador, the third and last war Guatemala fought during Carrera's presidency from 1850 to 1865. The Salvadoran president, General Gerardo Barrios, had sent a special emissary to the United States to purchase arms, war supplies, and a ship to be used against Guatemala

on the seas. This agent was Dr. John Henry Segur, who had been a filibuster under Walker, a reason for which Milla and Molina distrusted his mission even more.<sup>43</sup> Borrowing a phrase currently popular in the United States with Phineas T. Barnum, Milla wrote Molina saying, "the humbug of our don Gerardo will already have reached your ears."<sup>44</sup> He included in that letter the description of the Segur mission, as well as another Barrios-inspired mission to Switzerland on the part of Milla's friendly enemy, Lorenzo Montúfar, who sought financial aid, troops, and ships from Europe to aid President Gerardo Barrios against Guatemala.

The history of the Segur mission was never written. There were many documents making reference to his activity in the correspondence of Minister Antonio José de Irisarri written to the Guatemalan foreign ministry from the legation in the United States, however, and in letters of June 17, July 11, and September 3, 17, and 25, 1863, Irisarri told how Dr. Segur purchased a ship named the "Commander." Segur was thwarted in his effort to run the Union blockade during the Civil War, however, by order of the Secretary of State William Seward, upon the denunciation of Minister Luis Molina.<sup>45</sup> Thus, El Salvador never had the use of the gunboat against Guatemala, since their war ended on October 26, 1863, before the gunboat could leave United States waters. Of all these intrigues, Milla wrote the following:

I also have been informed of what you have done to counteract the machinations of the filibuster and doctor-emissary of Barrios. I hope that he will enjoy the same fate as the other Licentiate /Lorenzo Montúfar/, who went to Europe to seek millions, ships, and Swiss hands for the same Barrios.<sup>46</sup>

The personal hostilities between Montúfar and Milla were well-

advertised in Guatemala, but only Montúfar's version of affairs ever came into print--in his Autobiographical Memoirs and his seven-volume Historical Sketch of Central America. However, the Milla-Molina letters deserve publication, for, along with all the history they contain, the rebuttal of Milla to Montúfar was one which should have been aired long ago. In his description of Montúfar, Milla gave at least as good as he received at the hands of that sometimes-liberal spirit, and he did so in spite of the fact that José Batres, the post-friend of his schooldays, had been a first cousin of Lorenzo Montúfar y Rivera Maestre.<sup>47</sup> All that Milla could say for that relationship of his best friend and his severest critic was that "it certainly is a pity that Montúfar is so little Montúfar, and so much Rivera Maestre!"<sup>48</sup>

The dissident don Lorenzo was determined to harrass the Conservatives of the Carrera government from his exile in Liberal Salvador, and, yet, Milla consented to help Montúfar at such times as the following, taken from a letter of May 6, 1861:

Lorenzo Montúfar is going to spend some time there [in Washington]. Through your brother Pepe he asked me for a letter of introduction to Irisarri, and it is going out to him today with the condition that he visit Tassara for me. Both of them are excitable, and they might just get along because of their similar temperament.

No resentment was in evidence against Montúfar in that letter, but rather a paternalistic, easy-going attitude of trying to see matters smooth themselves out, which was a marked characteristic of Milla all through his lifetime.

A year later, in a letter of June 6, 1862, Milla remarked to Molina that he had heard Montúfar was named Minister of Salvador to

Washington. The rumor was afoot that Montúfar was repeating a ridiculous charge that Guatemala was trying to annex herself to Spain, but Milla discounted general acceptance of the story because he felt it was against common sense to believe it. However, "if it is a fact, then, that Lorenzo has put into motion that humbug, I will be very sorry for him and nothing else." The Guatemalan mission sent to Spain at that time was one of attempting to conclude a treaty with that country, but, as Milla wrote on August 6, Montúfar's imagination was such that "he is always ready to believe quickly the worst possible, as long as it treats of this administration."

That annoyance continued, and on September 15, 1862, a speech of Montúfar's was read in San Salvador in which he reiterated that former idea.<sup>49</sup> Milla commented on a printed copy of the speech which reached him by saying of Montúfar: "This is like saying, Luis, as papa Chico Larrazábal did--'I will die without even knowing what talent is!'" It was in the same letter that Milla told Molina that Barrios had sent Montúfar to Europe to seek financial aid for the coming war. Again, on October 21, 1862, Milla showed compassion for Montúfar, but was sorry that the latter caused so much trouble: "You tell me that the entire blame is not Montúfar's. . . . I wish that might be the case, but, unfortunately, I do not believe so." When the Mexican government later declined to accept a new Guatemalan minister, Milla explained to Molina on November 6, 1862, that the denial "was founded on the rumor begun by that bad countryman of ours." From such remarks, it could be seen that Montúfar's was scarcely a spotless political record as viewed by his own

contemporaries.

Together with the various intrigues and filibustering expeditions, there was a good deal of American and British governmental interest in Central America. Milla noted that the Cass-Irisarri Treaty had been ratified in 1859, a treaty which assured the United States neutral transit of the isthmus of Nicaragua. On his return from Washington early that year, Milla met in Colón a number of engineers and workmen of a company that hoped to construct a canal in Nicaragua, the International Canal Company, whose chief was Mr. Felix Belly. Milla felt that the project had little hope of success: "We shall see if it materializes, of which I do not have much hope."<sup>51</sup> He was right, too, since Belly failed to fulfill his contract with Nicaragua, and his concession was revoked in 1868.<sup>52</sup>

Among the projects of the Carrera government for internal improvements, there was an interest in highway construction. From that interest arose the problem of Belize, or British Honduras, which was still disputed at mid-twentieth century by Guatemala and Great Britain. British logcutters had long inhabited the Belize area, north and east of Guatemala, but, in 1859, the two countries sought to settle their differences in the territorial dispute that had arisen over the de facto control of that region by the British settlers. A treaty was signed in April, 1859,<sup>53</sup> but its terms were allegedly misunderstood by both parties so the agreement was broken off.

An interesting thing from the Milla letters was to see his practical attitude toward England. He said he did not like the "encroachments"



of the English woodcutters, but, faced with England's power, he saw little remedy for Guatemala. He felt that if they could get a road from the capital city to the Caribbean coast that was important for the country, and it was the best they could hope for in all practicality. Of the treaty he said, "perhaps the politicians of that country [the United States] would not like it much, for they see, or claim to see, with displeasure everything which smacks of European intermeddling in our affairs."<sup>54</sup> The politicians in his own country liked them no better, and the British negotiators, Charles Lennox Wyke and Captain Henry Wray, referred to from time to time in the letters, were unable to carry out the negotiations. The treaty failed, and the Belize question persisted as a Guatemalan political slogan--"Belize is ours!"<sup>55</sup>

Besides the foreign intrusions in Central America, there were other international disturbances of which Milla wrote. In September, 1862, he discussed with Molina the French intervention in neighboring Mexico under the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph, but Milla was not too surprised at that trouble arising in a country "so dislocated and badly accustomed as Mexico."<sup>56</sup> The interesting and historically persistent lack of warmth between Mexico and Guatemala was apparent in his remarks: "We are fed up, common men and beggars (cucuxques) of having a separate monarchy, and the idea of being the tail or the appendage of Mexico does not enter anyone's spirit but is seen with a proper repugnance."<sup>57</sup>

While the presence of French troops did not seem to pose any disturbing threat for Milla, his attitude toward the United States was

not so tranquil. He liked presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln because he was "a person of moderate opinions in matters of foreign policy . . .," something which Milla believed essential for Central America at that time because of the threat of filibusterism.<sup>58</sup> His interest was equally keen when Lincoln assumed the presidency and a rupture of the Union seemed imminent, but his concern over the division between the Confederacy and the Union was that the United States might emerge from a civil war even more militaristic than before. That would be another international threat for Central America, a possibility that did not occur to him in the case of French intervention under Maximilian in Mexico.

Sensing the beginning of a crude and prolonged civil conflict, Milla wrote Molina of the "more or less United States," a phrase he jokingly wrote from time to time in English in his letters.<sup>59</sup> When hostilities began with the capture of Fort Sumter, Milla wrote with manifest satisfaction that "it is a sad spectacle of a great and advanced country, which draws apart and destroys in a short while the work of many years; but Providence sees to it that a day of accounting arrives, and those gentlemen certainly have many accounts to settle up."<sup>60</sup> He doubtless felt that a good civil conflict would somewhat even the score for manifest destiny in Central America.

Another civil war soon attracted Milla's attention from the course of the American campaigns. In 1862, Central America was preparing to launch a war of its own, and Guatemala and Nicaragua allied themselves against El Salvador and Honduras in a war in 1863. Milla had remarked about the trouble brewing in Salvador on his way home from the United

States, but he later felt the Isthmus was in a period of Octavian peace. In a letter of April 21, 1861, he first noted with apprehension that Salvador's president, General Gerardo Barrios, was interfering in Honduras. He felt it would not come to anything serious because "Guatemala has shown him her teeth and has said to him, like certain ladies said to a foolish friend in New York under certain annoying circumstances: be quiet."

Milla was mistaken in his estimate of Barrios, however, because hostilities increased due to a series of annoying incidents. A typical incident arose over the expulsion from Salvador of Bishop Miguel Pineda y Zaldaña. Milla related that

Barrios has gotten himself into a foolish, and, in my opinion, dangerous question with the Bishop and his clergymen, all because of a speech given by a student on September 15. Mr. Zaldaña overstepped himself, asking for the exile of the orator, and the government has gone even further in expelling the Bishop, whom we will have here soon. I certainly hope the matter does not produce disagreeable results!<sup>61</sup>

The bishop was received in Guatemala with a great deal of pleasure later on.<sup>62</sup> Milla knew of the close relationship of Church and state in Guatemala under Carrera, and he held Barrios' act to be dangerous on that account. In that letter and others, Milla displayed no servile attitude to the Catholic Church like that of the government he served. Other vexing incidents have already been related in the matter of Dr. Segur in the United States and Lorenzo Montúfar in Europe and Washington.

When Barrios obviously hoped to annex Honduras and to establish a common government with Honduras, Costa Rica became alarmed. Milla believed that a struggle could be avoided only by that magic Conservative

panacea which was balm to the most odorific of situations--prudence. Milla wrote Molina that "here we are (and excuse me for bringing myself into the account) more prudent than the devil himself, as Tassara used to say, and therefore there will be no deviltry, at least not with our concurrence."<sup>63</sup> The deviltry did continue until December, when relations were severed between Guatemala and El Salvador, and, in 1863 war broke out with Rafael Carrera attacking Coatepeque, a Salvadoran town bordering with Guatemala.<sup>64</sup>

In spite of his partiality toward the Guatemalan cause, the details which Milla related about the course of hostilities were accurate for the most part. His description of the events was vivid and interesting. In the war he described, there were very human elements: "We continue the hostilities with El Salvador, although the rainy season on the one hand, and on the other the necessity that the country people have to tend their planting in the present season [May], impose a truce on the belligerents."<sup>65</sup> Or, he painted a lively action such as the defeat of General Máximo Jerez in Nicaragua when that enemy "danced a poor step in the streets of León. . . ."<sup>66</sup>

At war's end, he condemned both the lack of courage of Gerardo Barrios, who fled the final battle, and his lack of judgment in bringing his people into such a disastrous conflict. His comments on Barrios reflected the eternal comic-opera role of departing Central American presidents when he wrote that "Barrios has decamped, bound it appears for the United States; and he goes off hurling a thousand bravadoes and offering to return."<sup>67</sup> After all, Milla said, the time for Central American unity

was not yet ripe for "the nationality, of which everyone talks, no one wants in reality--and, when that idea arises, either it is an innocent and impracticable utopia, or it is a pretext for new discord."<sup>68</sup>

Central American economy and society interested Milla too, although not nearly to the same degree as politics; but, his was a passive interest for he never suggested a solution to current difficulties. The power to describe came readily to him, but innovation or positive action was quite another matter. Speaking of foreign concessions and investment, he frankly admitted Guatemala's limitations, for "I find it difficult to think there may be capitalists there [in Washington] who want to use their money here with 7% interest when they can invest it in that country at equal terms and with every guarantee humanly possible."<sup>69</sup> Discussing the processing of sugar, he observed that "since I fear, as you do, that these things are not for here where all that is in its beginning stages, and we can pretend no such refinements."<sup>70</sup>

In 1857, a commercial process for the preparation of synthetic dyes was discovered, and the natural dyes made from cochineal were left dearer in price and therefore in less world demand.<sup>71</sup> That was a staggering blow to a major export item of Guatemala's foreign trade, and an economic crisis arose as a consequence of the falling price of the dye. Many people abandoned their industries maintaining the dye insects, and Milla described the falling circulation of money and the cutting off of international bank drafts,<sup>72</sup> a typical problem in those countries where a one-crop evil leaves the nation with complete dependence on the international markets for internal economic stability.



With all his interest in Guatemala, Milla never suggested any positive remedy for economic ills, hoping always that some solution would turn up to improve the economy. Molina, on the other hand, never missed an opportunity to suggest ways and means to better economic conditions. Writing from Washington on August 20, 1861, Molina advised Pepe Milla that

now . . . the cochineal business is almost ruined by the new discoveries which have replaced it with more advantageous methods and diminish the demand by less than half. It is necessary then that our Guatemala be dedicated to the production of coffee, cacao, cotton, and sugar.

There was a concrete and forward-looking suggestion, which eventually proved to be the path of the Guatemalan economy!

The problem of vitalizing the Central American republics through the immigration of new Caucasian racial elements attracted the attention of Milla and his contemporaries. He wrote Molina of their preference in Guatemala for European immigrants and of the practical difficulties they had encountered in attracting them:

You have not forgotten the unfortunate results that different colonization projects have brought in these states due to causes still existent and disappearing slowly. A climate generally prejudicial to Europeans, especially on the coasts; the suspicious character of our countrymen; the danger of admitting religious and other tolerances, have to be taken into account before embarking on adventures of this sort. On the other hand, what kind of immigrants could come here without those dangers? I don't like Irishmen or Germans, even when they are from Catholic states; I would prefer the Latin race, and it, unfortunately, either emigrates little or goes by preference to other places.<sup>73</sup>

Milla concluded that immigration was surely to be desired, but he sought no positive solution, for he was no innovator in social matters any more than in economic ones, nor did he attempt to analyze social matters in

his literary works later on.

Through Milla's letters ran thoughts of the possibility of Chinese coolie immigration,<sup>74</sup> of that of Canary Islanders,<sup>75</sup> and of Negroes,<sup>76</sup> and he described the repercussions against such ideas during the panic over the fall of the cochineal market and the resultant Guatemalan labor problems by saying that "rumors have gone around that foreign artisans are going to be brought in, so that the workers of the country will not eat, and others no less absurd, which keeps up some agitation which will perhaps last while the economic situation does not somehow improve."<sup>77</sup>

The United States Minister Resident in Guatemala, Mr. Beverly E. Clarke, was advising plantation owners to bring in free Negro families to work their lands, as Milla wrote on July 21, 1861. Milla himself was considering doing so on his plantation, Quesada, in Jutiapa Department. Molina advised that Milla should be cautious because free Negroes could work only in cotton or sugar, neither of which was well-developed in Guatemala at that time, and the distance and expense of immigration would be great.<sup>78</sup> Minister Clarke had already written the United States Secretary of State that Guatemala would take no Negroes, and a squabble between Secretary of State William Seward and Guatemalan Minister Irisarri finally brought the Negro colonization question to an end.<sup>80</sup> Milla later could not resist the temptation to poke fun at Costa Rica, a country renowned for its predominantly white European population, which had accepted free Negro colonists: "You probably already know that Costa Rica asked for them; this is a confusing matter. There is a republic which has the great fortune of having a homogeneous population, and now she wants to pour

coffee into her milk."<sup>81</sup>

In his letters, José Milla displayed many of the literary traits for which his sketches of Guatemalan customs and other literary works were later to be known and loved, although the letters were written a few years before the bulk of his writing was to appear after 1865. A few examples will suffice to point out some of these characteristics. In commenting on a letter sent by Molina from Newport, New Hampshire, a favorite watering-place, or resort, of that era in the United States, he wrote that "I had the pleasure of receiving your latest letter from Newport, and I am happy that you had gone to bask in the sun at that place, the favorite spot of the fashionables (predilecto de los fashionables), that Escuintla of the Yankees (save a thousand and one differences)."<sup>82</sup> The town of Escuintla was, and still is, a favorite resort where residents of the capital at Guatemala City descend from the 5,000-foot altitude of the highlands to the 1,100-foot piedmont at Escuintla to enjoy a welcome change in temperature and altitude and to bathe in beautifully clear natural springs.

Upon describing the opening of the Carrera Theater in a letter penned October 23, 1859, he wrote that "the new Theater . . . is really very beautiful, and I can tell you that in some respects it is better than the Academy of Music of New York, and in every respect quite superior to the other theaters that I knew in that imperial city." These statements on Escuintla and on the new Carrera Theater were characteristic of the outlook of the authentic and legitimate national prototype, Juan Chapín, who Milla later created in a three-volume travel book, a Guate-

malan who ardently loved his homeland and for whom Guatemala was superior to Washington, Newport, London, Paris, or any other place in the wide world.<sup>83</sup>

Possessed of a keenly-developed sense of humor, Milla could sketch the ridiculous in human activities without sarcasm for human shortcomings. Undoubtedly, that ability came from his genial nature, and it led him always to approach human nature with a half-smile. He wrote Molina of the accidental death of a mutual friend, saying,

If you receive today's Gazette, you will see with grief the catastrophe that has taken the life from our friend and colleague Nacho González, who passing from a neighboring home to his own, having lost his house-key, fell from a wall seven yards high; 24 hours later he had died. Poor Nacho! His weakness was to play the youth when he already was nearing 50 years of age; and his defect killed him. Such is life!<sup>84</sup>

For Pepe Milla, few tragic human events, personal or otherwise, could cause him to suppress a characteristic tendency to the jocose, or facetious.

Frequently, Milla criticized the contemporary scene, and that same jocular humor marked his thinking, rather than any bitter or vindictive attitude toward his contemporaries, either enemy or friend.

Juan Rafael Mora, the deposed president of Costa Rica, tried to invade that country in 1860, and Milla related to Molina that,

In effect, Mr. Mora smears (as our friend General Herrán used to say) his cause. He made himself ridiculous by trafficking to and fro before Puntarenas, and today he is hiding out in Santa Tecla /El Salvador/, in my opinion with very little hope of returning to take part in any militant politics. This is the way almost all our men are, Luis; they do not know how to do anything, and, when least expected, the ear of a jackass peeps out.<sup>85</sup>

In his role of portraitist of Guatemalan society, Pepe Milla

commanded the skill of an artist in his drawings and caricatures of ideal and eccentric social types, and he presented them with a jovial smile, whether in praise or in criticism.<sup>86</sup> There was an excellent example of that in a postscript to Molina added to a letter written July 6, 1860:

Don Antonio Irisarri wrote don Pedro de Ayceinena, Foreign Minister/ that you had sent him Miguel García Salas, to whom he gave 50 pesos as a loan, García drawing a pound sterling against his father-in-law don Rosendo G. Salas. This cannot be anything but a felonous piece of rascality because Rosendo died over four years ago. Miguel has wandered about, running from one court capital city to another, living off his fellow creatures. So that bore won't lose his small change, it has been decided here to repay the 50 pesos. You undoubtedly did not know what kind of a son of a gun he was, and I am telling you only for what value it may be to you.

One final characteristic of Milla's letters was his use of words and phrases from French, Italian, and English. The nature of the correspondence best explained the fact that Milla used English most. He very often reminisced with Molina over events of his brief trip to the United States in 1858 and 1859, and he was therefore prone to using the English of that country. From his editorship of the Gazette over the years, Milla came into constant contact with newspapers from the United States, and he showed that he knew it well, although how well was difficult to determine because he employed only a few words at a time. In a typical letter written Molina on September 6, 1861, he told him to send "word of yourself and all that may be going on in that world and that I may not find in the Newspapers." ("... me des razón de tí y de todo lo que haya por esos mundos, y que no pueda yo encontrar en los Newspapers.") A similar example was that already related in the episode of his energetic friend who fell to a premature death, Nacho González: "Pobre Nacho! Su lado flaco era hacerse el joven, cuando tenía ya cerca de 50 años; y su defecto



lo mató. Such is life!"

José Milla made the most of the experience gained on his trip to the United States and of his knowledge of the "other worlds" taken from letters and from the newspapers. He knew the value of travel and language and employed them to his advantage in the newspaper business, taking his readers on vicarious travels through his newspaper sketches of customs. He was later to remark: "In this century of steamships and railroads, half of the people [travel], and the other half remain stationary, meeting foreign countries through the anecdotes of the travelers, or through the books that some of them publish."<sup>87</sup>

#### Salomé Jil Begins to Publish, 1861-1862

Turning from the Molina letters to the literary works that Milla produced in the period under discussion, a very significant beginning occurred in December, 1861. Pepe Milla was by that time a national deputy, Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations, Subsecretary of State, and editor of the official Gazette. Then, he initiated a weekly newspaper in Guatemala City and named it La Hoja de Avisos (The News Sheet), usually called the Hoja.<sup>88</sup> That weekly ran for forty numbers, from December 13, 1861, until August 29, 1862, and its format was similar to that of the Gazette. The main sections of the Hoja were labelled "Political Part," "Religious Part," "Poetic Gallery," "Sketches of Customs," "Serial Story," and the like, and through these topics the paper afforded the reader such items as the following: editorials; local news; political events; biographical sketches of great men; feature articles on education, fashions, public works, and other matters; critiques and review of Italian opera

in Guatemala; poetry; and, advertisements.

In the opening issue of the Hoja, the course of action contemplated by the paper was stated by its editor: "To laugh at eccentricities is our design; to be read is our objective; to tell the truth is our way."<sup>89</sup> The intention of the Hoja was the more interesting because it was taken verbatim from the writings of Mariano José de Larra (1809-1837), the leading costumbrista writer of Spain in the decade of the 1830's when Spanish romanticism was in full sway. Larra was not credited with his own phrase by the Hoja, but in the first cuadro, or sketch, of customs, both Larra and Ramón de Mesonero Romanos (1803-1882), the next best writer of the genre after Larra, were mentioned.<sup>90</sup> Milla has since been called the "Fígaro" of Central America, for his sketches of Guatemalan customs, the romantic literary genre used to portray everyday life and prevailing social customs of any given society. What better documentation of the influence on Milla of Larra--whose pseudonym had years before been "Fígaro"--than the direct use of the latter's ideas in the founding of the Hoja!

More important for a study of José Milla was the fact that in that period of less than a year his first cuadros de costumbres were printed in the Hoja under an anagram, Salomé Jil, used for the first time by Milla.<sup>91</sup> These short stories, or sketches, of customs represented a literary genre which combined good language, good writing, and a certain measure of realism. With his jovial outlook on human affairs, Milla was well-endowed to create some hilarious accounts of the "ideal" Guatemalan social events, or social types, or prevailing customs, always with the

rich flavor of local color and picturesque situations.

In his opening sketch, "Who I am and why I am a writer of customs," Salomé Jil explained that even if the name suggested that he belonged to the enchanting sex, actually he was of the enchanted; and, his name really had nothing to do with the other Salomé's of historical fame. He had left his studies to become a nopalero, a worker with the cactus plant which nurtured the dye insects, but he didn't much like rural life. He did make some money on the dye product though, and eventually went to the capital where he successively contemplated becoming a policeman, lawyer, doctor, druggist, and opera impresario. He held pretty poor cards as a poet, so he abandoned any thought of writing poetry. Finally, he decided to tread a path which had scarcely been developed in Guatemala, that of writing about customs:

But since my object is not to achieve renown, but to contribute, even if in small part, to the betterment of our customs and to killing time, a thing that elsewhere is worth a lot and which around here we do not know what to do with, I decided to accept for the first time the kind hospitality that the "Hoja de Aviso" offers my poor literary efforts, and for the moment I will try out a few Sketches of customs.<sup>92</sup>

Milla's sketches of customs were actually of the same nature as those of Washington Irving in his The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayen, Gent. (1819-1820), which included "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Like Irving, Larra, and other authors who used the genre, Milla's style was amiable, very humorous, natural, and charming. The geniality of the author always left an impression of light-heartedness and lack of critical value, but perhaps that was deceptive in that an implied criticism was often present in a subtle form not designed to do

harm. Milla had jokingly assured his "beloved readers" in the opening issue of the Hoja that his "intention being only to entertain you, we will not be scrupulous in our choice of ways to do so, as long as these means do not oppose our own prejudices, nor those of a third party, as long as they are lawful, honorable, and proper."

Salomé Jil produced those short sketches in nineteen of the forty weekly issues of the newspaper, La Hoja de Avisos, with fourteen of the stories included in the first twenty numbers written from December 25, 1861, until April 9, 1862, or a period of three months and a half. His busy schedule of writing included sketches on social types like the native chapín, the local monopolists, and the swindler; they featured Guatemalan events like a dress ball, Carnival Tuesday, and the Jocotenango Fair; and, they described such customs as the making of pastoral nativity scenes at Christmas and social comportment at a wake. Although the brief stories had no particular plot, they were always full of the flavor of the contemporary Guatemalan scene as portrayed after a keen scrutiny by Salomé Jil, who frequently participated in the vignettes himself.

These stories of 1861 and 1862 have usually been referred to as the first series of Milla's cuadros in bibliographical references, but in the printed volume of his works running through five editions the usual arrangement of the first series has traditionally been in error. The last story to appear in the Hoja was "The Jocotenango Fair," but the first volume of the cuadros has always omitted that story and added several other stories that actually did not appear until 1865 in another newspaper. The most recent edition simply reasoned that the arrangement into

volumes of the stories was purely conventional.

Milla's sketches of Guatemalan society of the nineteenth century fared well at the hands of subsequent critics of his work. A distinguished Honduran literary critic, Ramón Rosa, wrote that "Milla, the unforgettable founder of our historical novel, in his Sketches of Customs, which for their fidelity and color, appear more the work of the palette than the pen, has left us exact and beautiful copies of what we have been and what we are and between the light and the shadow of his sketches, a kind of design that indicates what we ought to be as good and civilized people."<sup>93</sup> That same author, not a Conservative in politics like Milla but rather a Liberal, asked ". . . who has [not] read a novel, or a humorous sketch by Milla y Vidaurre, which although not distinguished by great inventiveness, will always bring recognition of his other works for their festive spirit, their very animated description, their acuteness, their appropriateness, and the humorous sayings, of that popular author of Guatemalan customs. . . ."<sup>94</sup>

The literary attributes he displayed were numerous: excellent character delineation; a nice balance between the burlesque and the philosophic; an ironical, yet tender, sense of satire; a rich current and historical language full of provincial "Chapinisms," but clear and well-chosen; an appreciation of natural beauty in his description of the countryside; and, an aptitude for silly names like "Rajacuero," or "Hideslasher," "Rompacuero," or "Hideripper," "Tijerino," or "Scissorsman," and "Delgado," or "Sprat."<sup>95</sup> Milla's approach was entirely descriptive, not analytical or moralistic, even though he felt that his journalistic



role did require him to enlighten or stimulate his Guatemalan readers. In the latter sense, his was a didactic purpose, but only to the extent of urging Guatemalans to a bit more social introspection.

During the busy year in which Milla presented his first sketches in the Hoja, he also published a week legend in the octava real, or eight-lined stanza, verse form, calling it Don Bonifacio. Leyenda antigua ("Don Bonifacio. An ancient legend."). A book of verse ninety-nine pages in length, it was printed in Guatemala City by the Imprenta de la Concordia, where the Hoja was also published. The dedicatory to Juan Diéguez was dated February 18, 1862,<sup>96</sup> and the volume was announced on sale early in March at four reales for a paper-back copy and ten for a linen-bound one.<sup>97</sup> The dedicatory to Diéguez, as well as the apparent attempt to imitate the Tradiciones de Guatemala ("Guatemalan Traditions") he had edited for Pepe Batres,<sup>98</sup> clearly displayed the continuing force and influence of their schoolday friendship.

Don Bonifacio, or the story of Don Bonifacio Manco y Bobadilla, embodied the traditional atmosphere and creole social setting in Antigua, Guatemala, in the eighteenth century. The action took place about 1731, and the principal character was a Quixote-like lawyer who was led, by too much reading, to entertain the theory that the souls of the dead inhabit the bodies of the living. When his wife's pearls broke, an old jeweler repaired them, remarking that they were strong enough to hang her with without breaking. She later pined away and died, with Bonifacio crying out at the funeral, as if possessed, that her soul had entered his body. His second wife was a woman of whom his first wife had been

highly jealous. One day the new helpmeet was trying on the pearls when Bonifacio discovered her, and the enraged soul of his first wife led him to strangle the second with the pearls. Aided by the old jeweler and a witch, Bonifacio escaped from his prison, only to hang himself later in the jeweler's cottage. "Here Bobadilla ended his own thorny life / Through the very same evil by which died his wife. /"99

The literary traits of the sketches written at the same time appeared in the poem. Satirical passages touched on, among other things, social customs, professional groups, poets, and Guatemalan events. The light-heartedness of his prose was reflected in the toying with versification in Don Bonifacio. Humor was all-pervading, although there were passages of great beauty which philosophized on life, death, and human behaviour. The following stanza was an old adage well put by Milla, describing Bonifacio's grief over the death of his first wife:

He thinks grief to be eternal, forgetting  
That time heals all our wounds  
And with this balm the deepest hurt  
Is healed, closed and scarred over.  
If not, to what would life come?  
Nothing, as our proverb says, is eternal;  
Adventures and pains are brief  
Which we earthly mortals feel.<sup>101</sup>

Milla's preoccupation with history was apparent in the opening stanzas of the poem, for his criticism of the lack of interest in history, in historical manuscripts, and rare books was evident:

One hundred thirty years ago there lived  
In the ancient city of Guatemala  
A lawyer, whose biography  
The rarest novel does not equal.  
Pouring through an old bookshop  
In a dark and dusty room,  
An antiquarian found it. No one knows  
Why it has remained inedited.

For over a century the voracious worms  
 Were gnawing away at the old manuscript  
 Which no one saw, for the simple reason  
 That the owner was a man who cared  
 Not a bit for such a book. A marvel  
 It was that our erudite came upon it;  
 And for him not a little grief arose,  
 To see over half a folio already chewed.

I bring to light this rare history  
 With whatever fruit from my research;  
 If someone accuse me of plagiarism,  
 Because my poor muse takes advantage  
 Of the wealth found in that handy mine,  
 I reply that this custom for ages  
 Has existed. . . . 102

His editorials in the past had touched on the historical theme which remained uppermost in his mind, and, future editorials were to turn to it again and again. Milla, in his poetry and in his attitude toward history, felt that he was neither poet nor historian. He left those arts to others.

Contemporary reviewers hailed the poem as being in the vein of great poets like Lodovico Ariosto, Lord Byron, and José Joaquín de Mora in their legends in verse form. They felt that

. . . Don Bonifacio gives the idea of the life of Guatemala midway through the colonial period, of the backwardness and social preoccupations, the imperturbable tranquility, and the material well-being of that era, whose memories ought not to be lost: an epoch (as before Mr. Milla, our fecund [Rafael] Goyena and later our unfortunate [José] Batres have demonstrated in some sketches) which encloses a rich mine, a quarry, which still awaits the hand of the lapidaries who may bare all the beauties that hide in their marbled veins.<sup>103</sup>

Again the theme of the need for historical writing was pointed out, a theme which was evidently in the thinking of many an author in Milla's day when the emergence of the republic of Guatemala cried out for the development of national life on all levels, from the political, economic, and social, to the intellectual. José Milla's "research" was already

good enough to evoke an appeal by that reviewer that the "memories" of the colonial era should not be lost.

Even the opposition newspaper, El Noticioso, had only kind words for Don Bonifacio. The author of that paper's critique felt that Salomé Jil pictured particularly well the national lack of punctuality, the beauty of natural surroundings described in the legend, and certain of the scenes of tenderness and sensitivity in the poem. The reviewer called it a work of ". . . finished sketches which a painter could transfer to linen . . .," and, he added that, "at times, Mr. Milla reminds us of the imponderable grace of the unfortunate José Batres Montúfar."<sup>105</sup>

Thus appeared José Milla's first book, published when he was thirty-nine years old. In the letter of dedication to Juan Diéguez, Milla quoted Byron: "'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print; / A book's a book, although there's nothing in't." /<sup>106</sup> He continued, saying that he had thought he was cured of the dangerous madness of poetry and that he had also thought to have escaped becoming a mediocre poet. However, the temptation had seized him "to write something in the genre of the narrative poem, a form little cultivated in Castilian. . . ."<sup>107</sup>

His objective was clear: "The Legend of Don Bonifacio has only the aim of depicting some of the characters we see almost every day, tracing little sketches of customs of the country, and putting into verse, or into rhymed prose, some of the provincial voices and familiar phrases of Guatemala, mixing with all this a few thoughts with moral and philosophic pretensions."<sup>108</sup> His source of inspiration for the poem was duly noted by Milla too, for he took the idea from an article in the Parisian

Revue des Deux Mondes of the previous year, entitled "Les hallucinations du professeur Floreal."<sup>109</sup>

In a letter to Luis Molina in Washington, he wrote on June 6, 1862, that he had sent several copies of Don Bonifacio to him by way of a baritone from the Italian opera company, a Mr. Amedio. In case the singer forgot to deliver them, Milla had sent four more by another gentleman. The latter were for Minister Tassara, for Peña--editor of the Crónica in New York, and for any other good use to which Molina might put them. When Molina replied with praise from himself and Tassara for both the Leyenda and the sketches of customs, Milla answered that he felt they would say that anyway because of their friendship for him.<sup>110</sup> Again, on October 21, Milla wrote Molina: "I thank our friend Tassara for the indulgence with which he looks upon the fruits of my idle moments, as the poets of the last third of the past century used to say." Pepe Milla still seemed to look upon his poetical ability with a proper sense of reservation.

#### José Milla and Italian Opera in Guatemala

Along with his trip to the United States, his marriage and the births of his first two children, his governmental posts, journalism, and initial literary endeavors, Milla also began to emerge as an important figure in the social life of the capital. In November, 1859, the year of his return from the United States, he wrote Molina that: ". . . there is nothing new in public life, and the people think only of entertaining themselves. Dances, operas, and so forth, only these provide excitement for the Chapins. You will read of this in the Gazette."<sup>111</sup> Of the



social activities and national festivities, he wrote: "There is great eagerness for opera, and all seats are committed for the season of 40 performances."<sup>112</sup>

The Gazette of September 29, announced a presidential resolution naming Counsellor of State Juan Mathen and Subsecretary of State José Milla to a new Directive Commission for the theater, which was to be called the "Carrera Theater."<sup>113</sup> That same issue of the Gazette announced the arrival of an Italian Opera Company, under the direction of don Manuel Lorenzo, who brought them to Guatemala from New York for the season, although the new theater was actually inaugurated with the performance of a Spanish company of verse, which had already been promised for five performances before the operatic group was contracted.<sup>114</sup>

"[Alexander] Dimitry wrote me recommending the prima donna Miss Claudina Cairoli, who has arrived, as you must have learned, with an operatic company which will begin to give performances the 8th of the coming month," Milla wrote Molina on October 23, 1859. That prima donna had been giving concerts and operatic selections in New York since 1857, having performed in such renowned New York music halls as Niblo's Saloon, the Winter Garden, Bodworth's, and the Academy of Music, as well as in Brooklyn's Athenaeum. She was considered a minor figure in New York theatrical circles, but, in Guatemala, she created a mild sensation. On November 8, the appointed day, the prima donna and her fellow artists opened a highly successful season with a performance of the Victor Hugo-Verdi romantic composition, "Hernani, or Castilian Honor."<sup>116</sup>

It was a gala affair, the first really well-organised opera season

and major social event of its kind in years, and Italian opera was to be for nearly two decades thereafter the delight of Guatemalan musical society.<sup>117</sup> The Gazette related that,

His Excellency, the President, accompanied by his daughters and a part of his aides-de-camp, entered the theater at eight o'clock. His Excellency wore a uniform, and he occupied the main box, which had been destined for his use. At that moment, the orchestra struck up a magnificent march which, at the invitation of the Directive Commission of the theater /Mathen and Milla/, had just been composed by Mr. /José/ Nicolao, maestro and director of the orchestra. This composition, performed under his excellent direction, produced a grand effect, drawing prolonged applause from the public. It will surely be adopted for those events which His Excellency attends in the theater and other public ceremonies. His Excellency, Mr. President, stayed until the end of the opera, very satisfied, not only with the execution of the composition, but also with the good order and joy which reigned during the entire function.<sup>118</sup>

Since Milla was the junior member of the two-man directive, Mathen's seniority having been established by his higher public office and a free ticket for a season box, Milla's role as caterer to and talented handy man for Carrera--again in a secondary role on the directive--was obvious. However, it was to be assumed that the establishment of such stable, orderly, and pleasing social processes as that of the operatic season did the rising public servant no harm with his uniformed superior. The personal flattery of the "Carrera" march being composed for that occasion was no mean piece of politics either!

In less than a decade after 1856, José Milla was promoted from Chief Clerk of Foreign Relations to become a Counsellor of State in 1864. He continued as editor of the official newspaper, and he founded a private paper which was published for nearly a year. He was a national deputy. A trip to the United States, his first trip outside Guatemala, had brought

him greater political prestige and new political and literary friendships of value to him in his work. Socially, he had become one of the "fornal" married class, and his benefactor, President Carrera, had seen fit to employ his talents in such important social posts as co-chairman of a commission to develop operatic entertainment to serve the elite of the capital in a period of "Octavian" peace. That same relatively calm period of time, while still demanding his attention to politics, did free him to begin the publication of literary works, an activity which was to monopolise the remainder of his life. It had been a fertile and productive period which gave every evidence that a promising career would naturally follow.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>José Milla, "Letter to Luis Molina," Guatemala, April 21, 1861. This is one of fifty-three unpublished letters exchanged by José Milla and his wife's uncle, Luis Molina, during the years from 1859 to 1863. The original letters are in the custody of Licenciado Daniel Contreras, Director of the National Museum of History and Fine Arts in Guatemala City. In the present study use is made of typed copies of the transcriptions made by Licenciado Contreras from the handwritten originals. Most of these letters were written by Milla from Guatemala City to Molina in Washington, D. C., so they are simply designated hereinafter as Milla, "Letter," with the respective date, unless it is necessary to indicate an exception to that general rule.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., June 21, 1860.

<sup>4</sup>This was a representative salary for a post like Subsecretary of State. Manuel F. Pavón received 1,800 pesos a year as Counsellor of State and Minister of the Interior at the time of his death in 1855, as shown in the Gazette, May 11, 1855, p. 2. In 1861, the Guatemalan minister in Washington, Antonio José de Irisarri, received 2,000 pesos a year, while his legation secretary received 900 pesos, that information appearing in "Legación de Guatemala en los Estados Unidos," Legajo B-99-6-3, Tome 4430 [unpaged], in a letter of Irisarri to the home government dated November 2, 1863. Hereafter, the name of the archive will be simplified to General Archive of Guatemala.

<sup>5</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, July 1, 1859, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., July 10, 1859, pp. 2-3.

<sup>7</sup>Milla evidently did not read his own newspaper carefully because the date of the decree given in the Gazette was 1843, not 1842, and the official title was Subsecretary of State, not Subsecretary General of State.

<sup>8</sup>Winifred Gregory (ed.), American newspapers, 1821-1936 (New York, 1937), p. 464. La Cronica was a newspaper published in Spanish in New York from 1848 to May, 1867.

<sup>9</sup>Samuel Flagg Bemis, The American Secretaries of State and their diplomacy (New York, 1927-1929), VII, 30.

<sup>10</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>11</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 85-86.

<sup>12</sup>William Ray Manning, Diplomatic correspondence of the United States. Inter-American affairs. 1831-1860 (Washington, 1932-1936), IV, 76; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, VII, 79-80.

<sup>13</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, October 28, 1858, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., November 4, 1858, p. 1. The "Columbus" carried the usual cargo of the day: cochineal, cacao, woolen clothing, lead, mail, and nineteen passengers.

<sup>15</sup>Milla, "Letters," as follow: October 23, 1859, "I have recalled our brief visit in Washington, and I need only have my old and ill-humored uncle with me to be completely happy now. . . ."; December 4, 1859, ". . . I am reminded by a thousand memories of the happy days that, exactly a year ago, we spent together. . . ."; and, on October 21, 1862, he still recalled that, "Day after tomorrow, it will make four years since I left this city to go to meet up with these more or less United States."

<sup>16</sup>Gaceta de Guatemala, February 1, 1859, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Lewis Martin Spears, "Lewis Cass," Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1928-1936), III, 564.

<sup>18</sup>Reported in the issue cited in note 16 above.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., March 31, 1859, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup>Mercedes Milla, "Letter to Luis Molina," Guatemala, September 23, 1859.

<sup>22</sup>Milla, "Letter," August 23, 1859.

<sup>23</sup>Lisandro Sandoval, Semántica guatemalteca o diccionario de guatemaltequismos (Guatemala, 1941-1942), I, 260-261.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., I, 119.

<sup>25</sup>García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

<sup>26</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 86.

<sup>27</sup>Milla, "Letter," April 7, 1860.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., June 21, 1860.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., July 6, 1860.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., August 21, 1860. This letter told of the birth of the son. Another letter, September 6, 1860, supplied the child's name--José Mariano.

<sup>31</sup>García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., p. 19.



<sup>32</sup>El Noticioso, October 19, 1861, p. 2. This issue was Volume One, Number One, of the paper. The poem was also reproduced in its entirety by Ramón Uriarte, Galería poética centro-americana (2d ed.; Guatemala, 1888), II, 7-11.

<sup>33</sup>M. Romero-Navarro, Historia de la literatura española (2d ed.; Boston, 1949), p. 497.

<sup>34</sup>John D. Wade, "Alexander Dimitry," Dictionary of American Biography, V, 314-315.

<sup>35</sup>Manning, op. cit., IV, 144.

<sup>36</sup>Margaret Leech, Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865 (New York, 1941), pp. 47, 296.

<sup>37</sup>Milla, "Letter," April 7, 1860.

<sup>38</sup>Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana, LXX, 1181, and IX, 1492.

<sup>39</sup>Correspondence between Washington and Guatemala before the year 1860 delayed a full month. In that year, Milla commented in a letter written April 7, that he was writing two letters, taking advantage of the "Columbus" which was going to begin to make the run together with the "Guatemala," giving communication every two weeks.

<sup>40</sup>William O. Scroggs, Filibusters and financiers (New York, 1916), pp. 378-379.

<sup>41</sup>Jones, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>42</sup>Milla, "Letter," September 21, 1860; Zamora Castellanos, op. cit., p. 378. General Mariano Alvarez led the Honduran troops against Walker.

<sup>43</sup>Milla, "Letters," October 7, 1863, and December 21, 1863, mentioned Segur.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., April 7, 1863. For the term "humbug," see Max Maretzek, Crotchets and quavers; or, revelations of an opera manager in America (New York, 1855), p. 346. Maretzek said P. T. Barnum in his autobiography 'candidly owns that he first gave himself the name of the "Prince of Humbugs. . . ." 'But--"What is a humbug?" you ask. Exhibiting a fly through a microscope and passing it off as an elephant to one who pays, would, my dear Luigi Lablache, be a very decided humbug.' The connotation of hoax or fake is obviously what Milla meant to use to describe Gerardo Barrios.

<sup>45</sup>These Irisarri reports are included in the bound volume of handwritten correspondence cited from the General Archive of Guatemala in footnote 4 above.

<sup>46</sup>Milla, "Letter," October 7, 1863. <sup>47</sup>Armú, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>48</sup>Milla, "Letter," October 21, 1862.

<sup>49</sup>Montúfar, Memorias, p. 352. He said of the September 15 speech: ". . . although I did not read it because I had already left for Europe on the steamship Guatemala on September 12, it was read in official solemnity."

<sup>50</sup>Milla, "Letter," September 21, 1862.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., March 26, 1859. <sup>52</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 696.

<sup>53</sup>José Luis Mendoza, Britain and her treaties on Belize (British Honduras) (Guatemala, 1946), p. 143.

<sup>54</sup>Milla, "Letter," August 23, 1859.

<sup>55</sup>The Atlantic Highway, already mentioned in the opening chapter as one of the last projects of the Arbens regime after 1951, was still an attempt to establish a highway to the Puerto Barrios region and thereby afford Guatemala a land route to the Caribbean and Atlantic seaports.

<sup>56</sup>Milla, "Letter," September 6, 1862.

<sup>57</sup>Sandoval, op. cit., I, 247. Cucuxque (or cucuxque) is an adjective meaning malvestido, or shabbily dressed, a Chapinism for "beggar."

<sup>58</sup>Milla, "Letter," July 6, 1860.

<sup>59</sup>See note 15 above. <sup>60</sup>Milla, "Letter," July 21, 1861.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., October 5, 1861. <sup>62</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 303.

<sup>63</sup>Milla, "Letter," June 6, 1862.

<sup>64</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 304 ff.; Zamora Castellanos, op. cit., p. 387. During the rest of 1863 until peace broke out in October, Milla's letters were primarily concerned with the various military measures taken.

<sup>65</sup>Milla, "Letter," May 7, 1863. <sup>66</sup>Ibid., June 7, 1863.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., December 21, 1863. <sup>68</sup>Ibid., September 7, 1863.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1860. <sup>70</sup>Ibid., March 21, 1861.

<sup>71</sup>James, op. cit., p. 672. <sup>72</sup>Milla, "Letter," August 6, 1862.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1861. <sup>74</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1860.

- 75 Ibid., April 21, 1861.
- 76 Ibid., July 21, 1861.
- 77 Ibid., August 6, 1862.
- 78 Luis Molina, "Letter," Washington, September 20, 1861.
- 79 Manning, op. cit., IV, 757.
- 80 Milla, "Letter," October 21, 1862.
- 81 Ibid., September 21, 1862.
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Salomé Jil (José Milla), Cuadros de costumbres ('Colección "Juan Chapín": 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1937), pp. 98-99; Majorie C. Johnston, "José Milla, retratista de costumbres guatemaltecas," Hispania, XXXII (1949), 451.
- 84 Milla, "Letter," April 7, 1860.
- 85 Ibid., April 22, 1860; Bancroft, op. cit., III, 372-374.
- 86 José Milla, Aventuras en Centro América, ed. Thomas Irving (Boston, 1951), p. vi; Johnston, op. cit., p. 451.
- 87 Salomé Jil (José Milla), Un viaje al otro mundo pasando por otras partes ('Colección "Juan Chapín": 3d ed.; Guatemala, 1936), I, 8.
- 88 Salomé Jil (José Milla), Cuadros de costumbres, prol. César Brañas ("Biblioteca de Cultura Popular": 5th ed.; Guatemala, 1952), I, xiv; Vela, op. cit., II, 86; Rosa, "Don José Milla y Vidaurre," op. cit., p. 187; García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., p. 17. A complete set of the forty numbers of that weekly can be found in the National Library of Guatemala in Guatemala City: La Hoja de Avisos, Año I, Número 1 (Guatemala, December 13, 1861) to Número 40 (August 29, 1862). Numbers 1 through 5 were printed in the Imprenta de la Paz, while the remainder were printed in the Imprenta de la Concordia. Brañas, in the prologue to the fifth edition of the Cuadros de costumbres, in 1952, made the usual division into volumes of the stories from that paper, stating that it ended its publication on July 28, 1862. It ended on August 29, 1862, and in the last number appeared the cuadro, "La Feria de Jecotenango," on pages 1 to 3, which has not been included in the editions seen by this writer.
- 89 La Hoja de Avisos, December 13, 1861, p. 2.
- 90 Romera-Navarro, op. cit., pp. 474-475, 502-506, 507-508; Brañas, prol. Cuadros de costumbres, 5th ed., p. xiv. Brañas suggests that one of the newspapers of Mesonero was the Diario de Avisos, possibly another idea borrowed by Milla from Spain.

<sup>91</sup>This was the first time Milla used the anagram, "Salomé Jil," in any of his published works that were found by the author of this study. The anagram is a transposition of the nine letters of his name, José Milla, to form the pseudonym "Salomé Jil," with no letters added or taken away. While the anagram dates from antiquity, its principal use has been for one's own amusement. Examples of anagrams would be "Florence Nightingale," transposed to "Flit on, cheering angel," or James I. ("James Stuart") changed to "A just master." In Milla's case, he used it to form a pen name. See "Anagrams," The Encyclopedia Britannica (11th ed.; Cambridge, 1910), I, 910-911.

<sup>92</sup>Salomé Jil, Cuadros de costumbres, 4th ed., pp. 68-70.

<sup>93</sup>Rosa, Oro de Honduras, I, 229.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., 232.

<sup>95</sup>Johnston, op. cit., pp. 449-452; Irving, op. cit., vi-vii.

<sup>96</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Historia de un Pere, Don Bonifacio ('Colección "Juan Chapín"'); 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1937), pp. 419-421. The following citations referred to in this chapter came from this edition.

<sup>97</sup>La Hoja de Avisos, March 8, 1862, p. 6.

<sup>98</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 446; John L. Martin, "Don Bonifacio: a Guatemalan narrative poem," Hispania, XXIV (October, 1941), 284.

<sup>99</sup>Martin, "Don Bonifacio," pp. 281-284.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., pp. 282-284.

<sup>101</sup>Salomé Jil, Historia de un Pere, Don Bonifacio, 4th ed., pp. 487-488.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., pp. 425-426.

<sup>103</sup>Niceo Mezagui, "Don Bonifacio: Leyenda antigua. Artículo 19," La Hoja de Avisos, March 8, 1862, p. 3.

<sup>104</sup>"Algunas indicaciones respecto á la Leyenda de d. Jose Milla," El Noticiero, March 21, 1862, p. 3.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>Salomé Jil, Historia de un Pere, Don Bonifacio, 4th ed., p. 420.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 421.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Milla, "Letter," August 6, 1862.

111 Ibid., November 24, 1859.

112 Ibid., October 23, 1859; Gaceta de Guatemala, October 22, 1859, p. 8, told that all seats had been sold out.

113 Gaceta de Guatemala, September 29, 1859, p. 1.

114 Milla, "Letter," October 23, 1859; Gaceta de Guatemala, November 5, 1859, pp. 2-3, described the premier performance and the appearance of the Carrera Theater.

115 George Clinton Dinmore Odell, Annals of the New York stage (New York, 1927-1949), VII, 63, 93, 99, 102, 193, 480f., and 693.

116 Gaceta de Guatemala, November 11, 1859, p. 6; Víctor Miguel Díaz, Las bellas artes en Guatemala (Guatemala, 1934), p. 574.

117 Díaz, op. cit., pp. 564-570. The Carrera Theater had been construction since 1852, and this was the beginning of its use for musical presentations.

118 Gaceta de Guatemala, November 11, 1859, pp. 6-7.

119 Ibid., September 29, 1859, p. 1.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE PASSING OF AN ERA IN GUATEMALA, 1865-1871

Farewell! rest in peace warrior of noble fame;  
History will record your illustrious name,  
And, in its annals will undying rest  
Your memory as it lies here in our breast.

José Milla "To General Carrera"

### Salomé Jil and the Abundant Years, 1865-1871

Perhaps the most abundant years of José Milla were those from 1865 until 1871,<sup>1</sup> for those were the years of his life in which he basked in the notoriety of high public office, enjoyed the comforts of a happy home, and produced the greatest volume of literary works of any comparable period in his life. He devoted himself to the publishing field and founded a second newspaper, La Semana ("The Week"), the first number of which, appearing on New Year's Day, 1865, really signalled the beginning of the final period of his active public life in Guatemala.<sup>2</sup> In that paper appeared the major part of his novels, sketches of customs, and the remainder of his poetic compositions, and the editorials of La Semana carried on a six-year campaign for the utilization of the historical resources of the nation. As if that were not a busy enough schedule of activities, José Milla also found time to dedicate to the teaching of the eager young men of the day.

For the most part during those years, Milla continued to enjoy the relative freedom from political problems that had characterized the years

since 1856, for,

In Guatemala, after the year 1848, a nucleus of men supported by General Carrera created a conservative system which was well-defined in its ideas and aims. Although it was a wretched system, it was carried out with an inflexible logic that brought honor to the conservative Guatemalans, and the thinking of the Pavóns, or the Batreses and Aycinenas was elevated to the category of a practical system which, if it did not lend itself to progress and liberty in Guatemala, at least gave an extended epoch of peace, confidence, and stability.<sup>3</sup>

While he proceeded to utilize his public position and his printing outlets in order to produce a constant stream of writings, Milla was nonetheless completely aware that he was in that period of a lull before the storm. In this sense, he must have suffered the bitter with the sweet, for he had been aware at least since his letter on the death of Luis Batres to Molina of September 21, 1862, that he formed part of a passing age: "Every day, Luis, we are losing people of quality. The circle of those of us who are truly dedicated to the public service is narrowing more and more, and I don't know how long we can last out."

Another example of his premonition of things to come was to be seen in an editorial in *La Semana* in January, 1865, as follows:

It is not to the present generation that the peaceful and orderly state of the Republic is due; it is to the past generation whose remnants are few and who will shortly have disappeared completely. . . . /but/ with respect for decorum and social interests, the young men of today can one day become the light and the honor of their native land. The country does not need vociferous politicians; it aspires to have learned citizens, friends of order, progress, and peace; I expect worthy successors for those who have founded the present order of affairs; and of this class, young men of today, keep in mind that few men exist anymore.<sup>4</sup>

Before long, this admonition was the more true, for the Conservatives lost the one most stable element in their entire thirty-odd years of public rule in the death of President Rafael Carrera, whom only death could separate from the executive office in Guatemala..

### The Death of General Rafael Carrera, 1865

A great deal of mythology has surrounded the figure of the president-caudillo of Guatemala, General Rafael Carrera, but a number of accounts of his appearance and personality were recorded over the years by foreign travelers who were able to leave the country and then boldly pen their observations of that man. Despite the uninformed approach of most of these casual visitors to Guatemala, a fairly succinct picture can be drawn of the man.

He was born José Rafael Carrera on October 25, 1814,<sup>5</sup> making him eight years Milla's senior in age. "He was about five feet six inches in height, with straight black hair, an Indian complexion and expression, without any beard, and did not seem to be more than twenty-one years old . . .," was the report of United States diplomat, John L. Stephens, on his trip of 1839 to Central America.<sup>6</sup> Carrera was, of course, twenty-five at the time, and his most recent apologist assured us that his racial composition was ". . . a combination of 10 1/2% of Indian, 17 1/2% of Negro, and 72% of Spaniard."<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the stigma of "Indian" remained with him through the years,<sup>8</sup> for each Central American traveler carefully read and embellished the writing of his predecessors, thereby creating the scriptural situation of the blind leading the blind.

Never one to give even the devil his due, the historian of the Pacific coast, E. H. Bancroft, minced no words over Carrera:

Rafael Carrera was a native of Guatemala, of Indian descent, of a violent, irascible, and uncommunicative disposition, base-born, ignorant, though gifted with talents, bold, determined, and persevering. From the common servant he became a pig-driver, and while such obtained much influence among the lower class of Indians--an influence which was due no less to his blood connections and the

force of circumstances than to his bravery and capabilities.<sup>9</sup>

When traveler Stephens suggested to Carrera that he could do much good for his country, ". . . he laid his hand upon his heart, and with a burst of feeling that I did not expect, said he was determined to sacrifice his life for his country."<sup>10</sup> He said what he meant, was a man of his word, and "he was talked of as *El rey de los Indios*, the King of the Indians."<sup>11</sup> A later visitor to the Isthmus felt that Carrera varied somewhere between tool and master of his aristocratic and ecclesiastical followers, but that he was ". . . a blind leader of fanatic and tumultuous herds animated by hate and lust, and eager for pillage, revenge, and murder."<sup>12</sup> And so the myth went on and was propagated by succeeding generations until a great need has been created to make a careful study of the man and his times in order to understand what drove a simple man to become a great man, for if he were not a great man there would not be so much effort to explain him away.

Rafael Carrera rose from obscurity to become the agent of the aristocrats and the clergy because of his influence over the Indian masses of Guatemala. While each of those groups enjoyed his favor, Carrera maintained a reserve to both aristocrat and prelate alike, and, acting in his own self interest, he never permitted either to gain sufficient power to threaten his own. For their part, they played the game for the power they held through Carrera's ability to stay at the head of the government against all challengers.<sup>13</sup> Throughout José Milla's writings and actions, that was the only conclusion with regard to Carrera that could be deduced.

Great censure was heaped on Carrera for the nature of his Thirty-Year Regime. From 1840 to 1842, ecclesiastical powers lost under the liberal regime of Mariano Gálvez were rapidly regained in essential matters like marriage, divorces, the fuero eclesiástico (special exemption from civil trial), restoration of convents, establishment of a forbidden booklist managed by the Church, and the leadership of the University of San Carlos. On October 7, 1852, the Carrera administration negotiated the first concordat of any Latin American republic with the Vatican,<sup>14</sup> and the steady entrenchment of the Church in Guatemala was ensured. The powers given the Church by that agreement literally reached into the pockets of the people, assuring not only the tithes but also a direct annual payment of 4,000 pesos to the Church out of the Public Treasury. Carrera received the right of patronato--the presentation or nomination to the Church of a candidate for an ecclesiastical vacancy--from Pope Pius IX, for his reward,<sup>15</sup> and Catholic activities thrived under his patronage after 1852. His successor, Vicente Cerna, from 1865 to 1871 intensified his dedication to the Church.

It was only to be expected that great criticism would be levelled at both the Church and its patron by anti-clerical Liberals who felt that the initial steps taken by Dr. Gálvez to curb religious powers in civil matters after independence had been unjustly erased by the Conservatives. However, in all fairness, with the exception of a very small group of "ambitious" politicians--including Barrundia and Lorenzo Montúfar, who took their intriguing abroad after 1849--the remainder of Liberals and Conservatives in Guatemala governed or collaborated with the administration



of Carrera from 1839 until 1871.

Both camps together made only a small group of men, living mainly in the capital city and fighting a war of words, but "it cannot be denied that the Liberals are equally responsible with the Conservatives for the march of public events during the Carrera regime."<sup>16</sup> It was a question of civic responsibility which has not since been solved--with relation to the entrenchment of the Catholic Church in Carrera's time or the Communists in recent days--but, for those would-be patriots who never desired genuine political change enough to fight for it, acquiescence in one era inevitably leads to the search for a whipping boy in a later epoch.

Not so, José Milla. When General Carrera died on April 14, 1865, it would have been very easy to let the matter rest there, but Milla was true to his stand with Carrera. In dedicating a poem "To General Carrera," for La Semana, Pepe Milla completed the circle initiated by his schoolboy tirade of 1844 against the caudillo. Of Carrera, Milla wrote:

He no longer lives! The light of thought  
Has been extinguished in that lively source;  
Without life, without vigor, motionless,  
His hand still grasps the shining sword.

That lofty, generous breath  
Rises not in that defenseless heart;  
The great and powerful spirit  
Of vast genius forever sleeps.

He no longer lives! Plucked by death,  
No more will his voice be raised in battle,  
Never again exposed that sturdy chest  
To the blows of death-dealing shot.

He conquered luck, overcame destiny  
And learned to enslave fortune.  
God chose to open him a splendid path,  
Which from humble cradle led to canopied-throne.

Returned his immortal spirit heaven-bound;  
A nation weeps o'er his mortal remains.  
With grief and mourning before him,  
Guatemala lays her triumphal standard.

Farewell! rest in peace warrior of noble fame;  
History will record your illustrious name  
And in its annals will undying rest  
Your memory as it lies in our breast.

April 14, 1865

J. M.<sup>17</sup>

A fitting tribute to the military might that was Carrera, it was equally fitting that those lines were penned by the editorial and poetical voice of the Conservative Party long ruled by Carrera, the conservative bard, Pepe Milla.

#### The Renewed Liberal Challenge, 1867-1869

Bipartisan political activity increased with the death of General Carrera, and the conservative faction was definitely being challenged once again, as Carrera had been challenged and deposed in the eventful years of 1847 and 1848. An army leader, Marshal Vicente Cerna, was selected as president by the legislature, and he took office on May 24, 1865. President Cerna continued the Carrera program, and, in retaining Carrera's ministers, the new chief could not praise their worth too highly: "Their honesty, decent motivations, intelligence, and long acquaintance with matters [of government] merit the esteem and the confidence of all good Guatemalans."<sup>18</sup> José Milla retained his editorship of the Gazette, as well as his high function as Counsellor of State, under Marshal Cerna.

The "good Guatemalans," who had expected certain reforms from the Cerna administration, found that such changes were not forthcoming by

1867. After two years of his tenure of office, the embers of the long-suppressed Liberal opposition again flared into heated contention for the executive office. Although Cerna was not the strong and feared leader that Carrera had been, his government responded to the challenge of military upheaval by successfully weathering more than four years of armed uprising beginning February 2, 1867, in the western highlands under the dissident government field marshal, Serapio Cruz. The insurgent activities were reminiscent of the memorable lucíos, led by the Cruz brothers, who furnished the impetus to the removal of Carrera from the presidency in August, 1848.<sup>19</sup> Active popular revolt again came in the outlying rural areas, not at the seat of government in Guatemala City.

While Marshal Cruz led the uprisings in the countryside, crossing over into Mexico or to El Salvador when the need arose, Liberal representation in the national legislature grew stronger. By 1869, when the election of the president to hold office for the term from 1869 to 1872 arrived, Cerna barely defeated the Liberal candidate, General Víctor Zavala, by a margin of 31 to 21 votes.<sup>20</sup> The Liberal lawmakers were led by deputy Miguel García Granados, who repeatedly used the sessions of congress to denounce the Conservatives. The very fact of their strong showing in the presidential elections belied charges that government in Guatemala was absolute, as the Liberals like to claim.

As a part of the growing Liberal offensive, Lorenzo Montúfar, in Costa Rica at the time, had to have his say about the Cerna regime. When Milla answered him in the pages of La Semana, Montúfar wrote a vicious article in which he had a number of things to say, among them to reproduce

the Milla poem against Carrera written in 1844.<sup>21</sup> The gist of the attack was that the men surrounding Gerna, pointedly Milla, were turncoats, and that the administration was incompetent to lead the nation.:

We will leave the literary part of the presidential message for the moment, promising to show Milla an error in every one of the paragraphs of that official document when the time comes to answer these lines; but, we will make him see from this present instant that, if a Presidential Message, as he says, is not an academic speech to be corrected and polished again and again, it is a thermometer of the civilization of a country and of the political and literary capacities of the men who make up the Government.<sup>22</sup>

He continued saying, "Now we wonder . . . Mr. Milla, if the opinions that you defend today so furiously might not be those that you combatted yesterday with frenzy?"<sup>23</sup> What might be Milla's outlook if a liberal regime were to take over the government of Guatemala?

In Milla's defense, the newspaper La Semana editorialized under the title of "A Question of Personal Grammar," alluding to the pretended contention over the literary content of the presidential message over which the polemic began. Interesting in its entirety, the third paragraph of that editorial afforded an excellent opportunity for Jose Milla's political record to be laid before the public:

Don José Milla has no reason to deny, nor does he deny, his ideas of the epoch to which Montúfar refers (1844), when he was twenty-two years old and still not a public figure, being a student of a College. It is not true that he has changed those opinions for a niggardly purpose, as Montúfar supposes, with that logic proper to certain souls, incapable of conceiving that one can shift from something except for some concrete inducement. The man whom Montúfar pretends to defame was called to serve the office that he occupies today at the beginning of the year 1848, and already, in 1846, had pronounced the servile speech to which don Lorenzo alludes. In August, 1/1848, the administration in Guatemala changed, and don José Milla, on the eve of the inauguration of the new government, asked for and obtained recognition of his resignation, in order not to serve under a regime contrary to his ideas. When the Conservative Party returned, at the end of 1849, he was again called to its employ. What does Doctor

Montúfar find censorable in all this? By chance, does he not know that many political figures of Europe and America have revised their opinions, not simply at the time of leaving the classrooms, but when already well advanced in their public career and after having contracted serious promises with their parties, by their deeds or by their writings? He cannot cite one single document, inedited or not, in the twenty years that have transpired since Milla began to write for the public and to take some part in the business of the country, that digresses one line from his present opinions.<sup>24</sup>

Concluded La Semana, ". . . Doctor Montúfar shows exactly what he is, and he gives ample motive to anyone to prefer . . . his diatribes to his praise."<sup>25</sup>

In view of Milla's public career since 1845, that statement in his defense seemed stronger than Montúfar's illiberal attack, but the exchange of charges was indicative of the renewed attack of the Liberal Party on the incumbents after Carrera's death, as well as of the note of imminent change that was in the air. His paper, La Semana, carried the conservative line of news events of the time, making a great ado over the first telegraphic dispatches sent from the capital to near-by Amatitlán, for example. These were the first of many projected lines to be laid, and the progressiveness of the times was hailed with great praise and hope. In the same issue, a page-two story mentioned the defeat of the rebel Rufino Barrios on the Mexican border at the Malacatán, and loyal Colonel Camilo Batlle was commended for his valiant action. Little did the editors of La Semana realize that Barrios, like the telegraph, would soon be part of a new day in Guatemala, of which Milla and the conservative elements were not to form an active part.<sup>27</sup> The second-page items of 1868 would make up the headlines of 1871.



### Salomé Jil Goes to Work, 1865-1871

José Milla entered upon what were to be his final years of public service in the Conservative Party beginning in 1865. In his newspaper, La Semana, which began publication on January 1, 1865, there appeared frequent descriptions of the banquets, tertulias, operas, musicales, public ceremonies, speeches in the meetings of the Economic Society, student graduations and prize-award functions, receptions for foreign diplomats and honored visitors to Guatemala, and the many religious and civil activities to which Milla was invited as a member of the governing elite of his country. In many of these festivities, he took part as guest speaker or master of ceremonies. Nonetheless, the aura of fringe-partner clung to Milla in his relations to the inner elite of Guatemala, for he continued to be feted as a talented artist of the tongue and pen, not as an aristocrat who deserved to serve the top social offices.

Although he was an honored government functionary and therefore led a very busy social life, these were the years in which he was most productive in the literary field. A steady stream of writing came out in the pages of La Semana to entertain the readers of the stories of Salomé Jil. Most of that writing was done in the form of weekly installments, or serial stories, and the devoted reader was urged to keep his subscription in force lest he miss any of the stories or chapters of the current offering of Salomé Jil. In such an event, however, the newspaper installments were gathered together at the end of each series of stories, or each novel, and the completed work was offered to the public in book form. For the paying subscriber who dutifully kept up his subscription--

thereby supporting the publication of the newspaper--the book was often offered as a premium at no cost, for Pepe Milla was also a good businessman:

#### PREMIUM FOR SUBSCRIBERS TO THE "SEMANA"

Fulfilling the offer made at the beginning of the publication of this newspaper, there will be given as a premium to those persons who have been permanent subscribers from Numbers 1 to 100, which form the first volume of the paper, the collection of Sketches of Guatemalan Customs, by Salomé Jil. This collection comprises the first series of the Sketches; that is, those which were published in the Hoja de Avisos, and they make up a sketchbook of 118 pages.

Thus, the promise of the Editor is fulfilled, and the second series of the Sketches will also be published in the same fashion; that is, those which have appeared in Volume One of the Semana. These will be given as a prize to those persons who continue to subscribe to Volume Two in its entirety.

The subscribers can choose, as a premium, between the collection of the first series of the Sketches, and the novel La Hija del Adelantado, by the same author.

To get a prize, the first and the last receipt of the subscription must be presented.<sup>28</sup>

The student of José Milla would do well to make special note of the fact that Salomé Jil wrote for a newspaper public and for the purpose of sustaining circulation. He continued to use his anagram, Salomé Jil, which he had created for "the first series of Sketches" in his first newspaper, La Hoja, and under that name were written jocosserious poems, blending merriment with sobriety; sketches of local customs; short articles on a variety of historical and contemporary themes; and several historical novels. The longer works were in serial form, with stories by foreign and local authors sandwiched in between to sustain reader interest, and they were to be found on pages three and four for the most part. That technique of the folletín, or serial story, was carried over from his early days as editor of the Gazette and has already been mentioned above.

In reaching an evaluation of the literary content of Milla's works, the journalistic bent of the writings must be taken into account for he wrote for the local Guatemalan consumption and not for a universal audience.

In the first number of La Semana, Salomé Jil saluted the New Year with a jocoserious poem entitled, "El Año Viejo y el Año Nuevo. Romance." ("The Old Year and the New. An Historic Ballad.").<sup>29</sup> It was a summary of the political events of the past year for the entire world, with a few comments by Milla on the state of foreign and domestic affairs. He wrote it in the romance metrical form, which meant that he divided it into four-line stanzas with the accented vowel of the last word of each of the first two lines being rhymed--but the consonants of the two words were unlike--and the second pair of lines were left with no rhyme at all.

"The Old Year and the New" was certainly more humorous than serious. It was the tale of two individuals who met at the door of an ancient castle, the one old, bald, and stooped--"SIXTY-FOUR"--and the other happy, vigorous, and beautiful--"SIXTY-FIVE." When they saw each other, they spoke not like two friends but rather like a departing minister of government and an incoming one. The young man said, "¡Adiós [agur] tata" ("Adieu pop"), in the provincial speech of the chapín, and the old man answered, "Bien venido" ("Welcome"). "How are [political] times?" received the reply of all right, for Rafael Carrera was still very much alive at the time. The two then went on to discuss the political troubles in which the entire world was enmeshed. In Europe, there were congresses, conferences, and armistices over natural frontiers during the period of the unification of the European national territories. A Scandinavian

union and Pan-Slavism "will be matters debated on for centuries and centuries to come," and Greece, Germany, Denmark, Russia, Egypt were all given mention in that romantic editorial in verse form.

Salomé Jil continued, speaking through the character of the "Old Year,"

But where, especially,  
They say that I have shone,  
Is in things of America,  
That Eden or paradise  
Inhabited by demons,  
As someone has said.

Troubles continued in the "Estados deg-Unidos" ("Dis-United States"), with the re-election of Lincoln, and the South Americans fell into disputes that neither the Old Year nor the South Americans understood.

"Central America alone has been in peace," said the old man, even if there had been disputes. And, then,

The gilded doors were opened  
To the magnificent, regal palace,  
The trumpets and the kettledrums  
Saluted the invincible hero,  
And heard in every cranny  
Through the palace repeated  
By the furthest echoes  
Upon the entrance of the belle child:  
SIXTY-FOUR is dead!  
Long live SIXTY-FIVE!

Salomé Jil.

That particular poem signed by Salomé Jil has not been reproduced in any of his collected writings or in his few poems that were entered in the standard nineteenth-century anthology of Central American poetry.<sup>30</sup> It had significance in that it showed again very clearly the importance of politics, of journalism as a means of expression, of light-hearted humor without deep analytical writing, and of the ever-present awareness

of history in the thinking of Salomé Jil. He devoted most of his literary endeavors to the interpretation of the works of the early Central American chroniclers to his own readers, or he became a chronicler of current history himself. That he was well aware of this role he played became more and more apparent in his writings through the years.

In his poem of New Year's Day, Milla had penned one stanza in which he said: "All that they say and affirm / Those who not a mite / I like; but it matters not to me / How much maligning they do."<sup>31</sup> His adversaries were out to ridicule him again, as they had done so frequently in the past. The Liberals must have deeply feared his journalism, if the agility and speed with which they hastened to oppose his newspaper writing were any indication of his value against them. La Semana, early in February--the month following its inauguration--reproduced a newspaper which parodied the seventh issue of La Semana. The parody was filled with malice and remarks bordering on vulgarity, and, from the language used in it and in Montúfar's Memoirs, the strong suggestion was that Lorenzo Montúfar did have something to do with it.

The parody was published under the title of "El Domingo Siete. Periódico Impolítico y Estrafalarico." ("Sunday the Seventh. An Impolitic and Slovenly Newspaper"),<sup>32</sup> mimicking the full title of the Semana. It maligned the religiosity of the paper, the regionalistic approach, the grammar used, the pro-Spanish nature of the government served by Milla, and the brutality of the Carrera regime. The editorial aim of the "Ingareño" ("Villager"), as the editor was called, was that "Insertions will be received if they are of no interest to anyone; otherwise, they



will not be inserted." A "Letter to the Editor" ("Remitido") poked fun at Milla's previous views on the fact that few competent men remained to carry on the government ("Pocos Hombres Quedan Ya"):

Letter to the Editor: Mr. Editor of the article, "Few Men Remain Now." My Dear Sir: What a start you gave the women upon saying that in Guatemala few men remain now! I thought that I had not read it well, and I turned again to read it; and I became convinced that what you really had complained was that today remain few men.

The play was upon the syntax employed by Milla of placing the word "ya" ("now") at the end, and not at the beginning, of the phrase. The unsigned opponent felt that such literary style was "slovenly," and therefore called his parody after that fact. Of course, the Liberals were not of the "few men" that Milla felt qualified to carry on the Conservative way of government, so it was a stalemate for both sides.

The parodist continued his caricature of the Carrera government:

We have the pleasure of announcing to our readers abroad that very soon the second tower of the two towers that are being built on the Cathedral will be completed. For those of us who are writing this Gazette, it has seemed a good thing that the second tower be built because, if there had been left only one, the other would be very lonely. Also, it was a good thing to make the pinnacle in the form of a public flagstaff, that should go between tower and tower, and that this be entrusted to Stonemason and Cooper, so that the matter will progress with the caution of a soul taken by the devil; and then the Cathedral of Guatemala will be one of the best buildings of Spanish Central-America, and many persons will even believe, reasonably enough, that it was not made here but came from London.

As if the influence of Church and foreigner, along with the lack of any real national progress to help the country in public works were not bad enough government, the caricature continued: "Report of a police agent. Mr. Inspector: There is nothing new to report. Today, there were found four dead men on the Street of White Lies with their respective corpses. John Vigilante." So the newspaper fight was on again between the Liberals

and Salomé Jil, or "Lagaré-Jil" ("Villager-Jil"), as the parody labelled Milla.

Notwithstanding the initiation of the annoying attack of the opposition, Milla went to work with his schedule of publication in La Semana. Under the section entitled "Literary Part," he produced a constant stream of stories. After the historical ballad in the first number, most of the remainder of the year he wrote sketches for each issue of the Semana. He began in the second number, of January 8, 1865, with a sketch of "A Happy Man" ("Un Hombre Feliz"), and he continued to write three to five stories a month until the fifty-ninth number of February 18, 1866, came out with "The Maids" ("Las Criadas"). Over a year went by, and then the final sketch of the second series appeared on March 16, 1867, in the tale of "Cigars and Cigarettes" ("Puros y Cigarros"). In 1865, Milla must have been pushed to keep up the steady flow of copy for La Semana, for in that year he wrote twenty-four stories of the twenty-eight that came out in the second series of sketches, as compared with the nineteen sketches of the first series that appeared in La Hoja de Avisos in 1861 and 1862.

La Semana entered a social item about José Milla in its issue of August 20, 1865, as follows:

Mr. José Milla, Subsecretary General of Government of the Republic, left this city on the 7th of the present month to go to the hacienda Querada (Department of Jutiapa), where he is at the present time.

We understand that the permanence of Mr. Milla in that place will not be prolonged for many days; with good luck, we suppose that he is about to return at the present time.

A glance at his publication schedule confirmed that Salomé Jil failed to

contribute to three issues of the Semana in the month of August, 1865. That was strong evidence that it was a schedule which he maintained by diligent labor from week to week, and not by building up a supply of stories to be printed at those times when he vacationed or did not feel up to writing.

The sketches of customs followed the same pattern already described with reference to his first series of sketches written several years earlier. Guatemalan customs, social types, and current events continued to be keenly depicted by Salomé Jil, always with a close relationship to events of the moment. His last sketch, "Cigars and Cigarettes," began, for example,

I have just read the interesting article on tobacco that was published in Number 3 of the "Semana." Horrified by the consideration of the cumulous of evils that gather over smoking humanity, which always has been held to be an innocent vice, I was imagining already to see come out of that aromatic plant, precious daughter of the torrid zone, cancers, paralysis, softening of the brain, dyspepsia, delerium tremens and the other infirmities enumerated by the terrific writing of Mr. Figuier. I wanted to distract my tormented spirit a little, for (I say it with shame) I am a smoker, a hard-hearted smoker, contumacious and odious; I took to the street and headed for the Jocotenango [section of town].<sup>33</sup>

A hilarious flight of imagination ensued, with mention of Mexico and Cuba, of Chile's Andrés Bello on tobacco, of France's Voltaire, and, a final summary by Guatemala's Charlie Chaplin--el cucuxque, the eternal beggar-philosopher. A vicarious traveler himself except for his brief trip to the United States, Milla based his knowledge of the "other world" on the many newspapers that he read in his capacity as editor of the Gaceta. Nevertheless, he endeared himself to his reading public by just such journalistic excursions outside Guatemala, always maintaining his

chapin spirit through the eyes of his local-philosopher types.

Besides the sketches of customs, Salomé Jil wrote a number of stories later collected in the editions of Milla's works under the category of "Various Articles." The Semana of April 9, 1865, printed "La Conjuración de los Contreras," part I, with part II following in the next issue. That "Conspiracy of the Contreras Brothers," in Nicaragua in 1550, typified the short narrative stories of historical events that Milla wrote, and his opening paragraph of the article reflected the historical bent of the man:

The ancient Chronicles of Guatemala abound in relations of dramatic events which are scarcely known; very few studious persons take the trouble to go through those old codexes, generally edited in a style that can offer nothing attractive to the readers of the day who have no particular inclination for that kind of writings.

One of the most interesting episodes of our history in the epoch following the conquest, is that of the conspiracy of the Contreras, the object of this little study. Our diligent and learned chronicler, don Domingo Juarros, scarcely devotes a very brief chapter to that notable event, perhaps because to detail events was alien to the plan of his work. Juarros referred to Remesal, who composed, in the year 1616, the very curious and interesting Chronicle (which name it well merits rather than that of History) published four years afterwards in Madrid. It has given me data for this narration.<sup>34</sup>

Milla was using colonial manuscripts at the time, and he intended to be the one to interpret that dramatic colonial era to his reading public in literary form, if not in formal history. Seven such stories--mainly on famous personalities--appeared from May until September, 1865. Adding the articles to his sketches, there were a total of thirty-six stories in substantially one year's time, a busy publishing schedule for any writer to maintain.

José Milla's announced intention to further the popular consumption of history was carried out, in addition to the stories he wrote on

historical themes, by a section of La Semana entitled "Historical Documents." In that section, the newspaper carried a significant amount of edited and inedited materials, mainly on the colonial period but also inclusive of some republican materials. The source, place, and date of such works was usually cited by the editor if books were involved; in the case of manuscripts, the source of the materials seldom appeared. Often documents were printed on the first page, while Salomé Jil's literary sketches always came on the third and fourth pages. Even if that did not necessarily mean that historical documents received a special location by the editor, certainly his determination to bring them to the attention of the reading public was apparent.

From November, 1865, until January, 1866, La Semana ran a printed copy of "Noticias Curiosas Cronológicas de Estas Indias," telling of the ruin of Antigua, Guatemala, from 1773 until 1776, and running through ten numbers of the paper. At the end of the printing, the following interesting statement appeared:

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS. Having terminated in our last number the publication of the manuscript entitled Curious chronological notices of these Indies, in whose last part is treated exclusively the ruin of Antigua, Guatemala in 1773, and of the removal of the city to the valley of the Hermitage, it has seemed to us that our readers would look with pleasure at some other documents related to those interesting events. We begin, then, to reproduce today a series of writings that were printed in the town of Mixco [near Guatemala City] in the year 1774, in the printing press of Antonio Sánchez Cubillas, documents whose rarity, combined with their importance, certainly make necessary their reproduction today since the number of persons who have any knowledge of them is very limited. As you will see, they are official documents, in which the ruin of Antigua and the transfer to the valley of the Hermitage were seen from a different point of view than that of the unknown author of the Chronological notices. Be that as it may, and taking into account the origin of these relations made by Spanish authorities, we believe that they are of a great historical value and that the present generation, very little



instructed in the events of that epoch so remote, cannot but take an interest in all that the past history of the country incites.<sup>35</sup>

"The removal of the capital to the valley of the Hermitage" by Juan González Bustillo followed through fifteen weekly issues of the paper, from January 21 until March 25, 1866, and, in the remarks on history as well as by the very fact that he showed it to be of such importance to Guatemala, José Milla was beginning to identify himself in the public eye with the history of the colonial period.

With a poetic counterpart to his jocoserious historical ballad of New Year's Day, Salomé Jil closed out the first of his most productive and happy years. On December 31, 1865, La Semana carried his "Proceso del Año 1865. Romance." ("The Trial of the Year 1865. An Historic Ballad."), an imitation of the former poem to which he referred his readers in a footnote.<sup>36</sup> That poem has not been reproduced in the editions of his writings in succeeding years either. For all its ambitions, the "Year 1865" had not fared any better than other years of history, leaving the world pretty much as it had found it. There were some innovations, such as

That constitutionalism  
Finally came to be established  
From east to west,  
From MEXICO to Jerusalem.

And,

Although dispatching many souls,  
Rest in peace, amen.  
United for better or for blows,  
Today, at your service,  
Are now found the States  
Which before in cruel civil war  
Furiously threatened  
To destroy or be destroyed.

Then, Father Time condemned 1865 to eternal shame and sorrow for his failure:

. . . the severe old man  
With a tremendous kick  
Hurled out SIXTY-FIVE,  
Which rolled away like a cask;  
And with a haughty pat  
Par derrière, (thrust in French,)  
Makes jump into the world  
The Year SIXTY-SIX.

Salomé Jil.

For the many things that the Old Year had been condemned, no specific condemnation was added over the loss of General Rafael Carrera. However,

--Sir, says the Year, humbly.  
Something remains for me; I don't know  
If I am to speak of Central America,  
Where I did not do so well.  
Its disputes and infirmities  
Did not falter. Afterwards  
I afflicted many families . . . --That's already seen,  
TIME irately interrupts him,  
Well, it is nothing, your grace  
Confesses that you were stupid  
There, as he well knew  
And it's better to be quiet  
And not provoke me. . . .

Milla probably meant to refer to Carrera in those lines, but there was double meaning because Milla had lost a favorite cousin and brother-in-law by an accidental death on the hacienda Quexada just before Carrera died.<sup>37</sup>

As poetry, the ballads Milla wrote were not good; they did display his cleverness for words, but they seemed rather to be an affectation for him for his own amazement and amusement, much like the use of his anagram. However, the poems as well as the historical documents and the sketches of customs written in the year 1865 did tend to set the tone for the fol-

lowing years. The present study will attempt to move along more rapidly over the remainder of the years from 1865 until 1871, giving as much information as possible in the space remaining. Perhaps the greatest volume of writing on José Milla has been that done by literary critics, the various prologues to the many editions of his works attest to that fact, so the remainder of this chapter will be devoted rather to the bibliographical side of Milla's life and works in those years.

Historical interest seemed to be awakening in Guatemala in 1866, as reflected in the publication of Juan Gavarrete's "Catálogo razonado de los objetos con que se inauguró el Departamento Etnográfico del Museo Nacional" ("Itemized catalogue of the objects with which the Ethnographic Department of the National Museum was inaugurated").<sup>38</sup> However, the holdings of that department were meager and pitifully incomplete, and the need for La Semana to continue publishing historical documents continued. From June 10 until November 11, the Semana printed historical materials in all but four issues of the paper; these covered the removal from Antigua to present-day Guatemala City, economic, and religious history over the colonial years.

History was the theme of Milla's writing in that year too, for La Semana announced to its readers that beginning with the issue of April 8, the historical novel, La Hija del Adelantado ("The Daughter of the Adelantado") by Salomé Jil, would appear at the rate of two chapters in each issue.<sup>39</sup> That plan was adhered to faithfully, and on June 17, the final chapters were published. On July 9, 1866, the completed volume of La Hija del Adelantado in 184 pages was offered to the public for six

reals.<sup>40</sup> It was the first attempt at a historical novel by Salomé Jil, but after so many years of his advising the people of the need to look to the history of the colonial period with all its drama and pageantry such a development hardly came as a surprise.

The setting of The Daughter of the Adelantado was in the city of Santiago, or Antigua, Guatemala, in the years between September 15, 1539, and September 11, 1541, when that colonial capital was flooded by the overflow of waters after a prolonged period of rain. Leonor, the beautiful daughter born of the union of the adelantado, or Spanish civil and military governor, Pedro de Alvarado and an Indian princess, fell in love with a young knight, Pedro de Portocarrero. The historical events of those two years were respected by author Milla, and the novel told of the love affair, of the supernatural ideas of the times, the love potions, and the like to satisfy the romantic taste of his reading public. Punishment of evildoers and the triumph of virtue met with the standards of morality of Milla's time too. Chivalric love, virtue, and fidelity, were counterbalanced by intrigue, poisoned herbs, and Indian wars. Right triumphed, but Portocarrero momentarily survived a near-fatal malady, only to lose his life while rescuing Leonor from the flooding city of Antigua.

Salomé Jil's foreword to the novel was noteworthy:

In writing this novel, my principal objective has been to make known some personalities and certain historical events of which the majority of the readers to whom these lines are dedicated have no more than a very scant knowledge. I have adhered to the truth up to that point where the need to give some dramatic interest to the novel seemed indicated. . . . In our ancient Chronicles the characters of the people and the references to the events are found described in the most summary manner. Respecting this or that chronicle wherever possible, I have let my pen run freely in everything that did not involve anachronisms (which I consider unpardonable, even in this

class of works), and in that which was not directly opposed to historical truth. Thus, the personalities that figure in this relation all really did exist, but the characters and the deeds attributed to some of them correspond to the fictional part of the work. In order not to be too diffuse, nor to distract the reader with notes, I have not cited the passages to prove the accuracy of many of the events related.<sup>41</sup>

José Milla was a narrative writer, who excelled in the description and not in the analysis of what he saw. While his intent was patently romantic, realism was constantly present in his writings in the form of his people, the naturalness and historical authenticity of the events he described, the exactness of atmosphere, and the abundance of local color. His own great interest in history combined with his industry and talent as a writer led him to exploit the native scene from colonial days to his own, and his keen insight as a sketcher of customs, which was his forte, gave him that extra something that achieves for a writer a great popular appeal.<sup>42</sup> All these factors were present in his first historical novel, and they continued to characterize those novels which followed.

Contemporary reviewers hailed the appearance of La Hija del Adelantado with great praise, foreseeing for its author a place in Latin American letters.<sup>43</sup> In fact, it was welcomed as the first of that genre in Guatemala, and the name of Walter Scott, the father of the vogue of historical novels, crept into the review to the everlasting detriment of Salomé Jil. In fact, Milla was damned by great praise, being elevated to a category he did not deserve and then being left there in a sort of purgatory in the years since his death. His was a good novel, well-written and interestingly told. It did not create any great personality nor establish any model for Latin American literature, much less for



world-wide consumption. It was not even the first of anything in Guatemala; Antonio José de Irisarri was the first Guatemalan novelist,<sup>44</sup> and Manuel Montúfar Alfaro preceded Milla with a historical novel by nearly two decades.<sup>45</sup>

The real value of the novel was historical in nature. Through it Milla encouraged Guatemalan interest in the historical past, such as in the case expressed very adequately by a Frenchman who was visiting Guatemala at that time:

I have just finished reading the interesting novel by Salomé Jil, the "Daughter of the Adelantado." Strongly impressed by that notable production by a Guatemalan author, who unites dramatic action perfectly combined with historic exactness and a measure of I know not what of local color that identifies the reader with the former customs of the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Guatemala, I wanted to wander among its ancient ruins. . . .<sup>46</sup>

His own productiveness in the years of the 1860's and 1870's also helped bring the genre into vogue in Guatemala. His true value was as a great writer and a persistent encourager of public interest in history in his own age, but succeeding generations of novelists have gone on to write better novels about more recent national activities.

Along with his search for and publishing of historical documents and the writing of his first historical novel, Salomé Jil found time to pen three more fairly long poems in November and December of 1866. These all combined seriousness with mirth, as the first of his jocoserious poems had done. "Risa y Lágrimas" ("Laughter and Tears"), told of the things from birth to death that bring people to laugh and to weep.<sup>47</sup> It was a series of silly character sketches in rhymes, mainly humorous like the following description of the "fortunate" young heiress:

A great hump and a lame foot  
 Has unhappy Elvira;  
 With one eye she sees north  
 And with the other looks south.  
 In spite of these natural gifts,  
 As the heiress of four haciendas,  
 She has a thousand suitors  
 From whom to select;  
 This is reason to laugh,  
 Not a thing to make one cry.

For, Salomé Jil felt that

Life is just an intermission  
 Where everything is reversed,  
 I think I came to prove,  
 That fact in my verse,  
 That there are tears that bring laughter  
 And laughter that brings tears.

"Deseos Cumplidos" ("Desires Fulfilled") and "La Conciencia" ("Conscience"), followed the same pattern of amusing the readers with sketches of the ridiculous side of human nature and social types, without being particularly finished poetry.

In the year 1867, a bright young Honduran student joined José Milla's circle of literature students and left an eloquent testimony to another of the paternalistic and generous activities of Salomé Jil's productive years. Ramón Rosa told in later years of the beloved and outstanding teacher with a completely humanistic dedication to his students that he found in Milla. Rosa recalled how he was attracted from the "province" of Honduras to the metropolis at Guatemala City to study with the author of The Daughter of the Adelantado and the Sketches of Customs, both of which had caught his imagination for their excellence. Rosa was a self-confessed bumpkin at the time, but Milla received him kindly into his private classes.

The celebrated writer was professor of Spanish literature and legal oratory in the university along with his private classes given at home,<sup>50</sup> and among Rosa's classmates were a number of young men destined for fame in later years. Notable among these students were the later archbishop, Ricardo Casanova y Estrada; literary men Antonio Batres, Ramón Uriarte, and Salvador Falla; and, statesmen, Marce Aurelio Soto, who became president of Honduras, and Ramón Rosa, Soto's assistant as president. Hence, Milla was the teacher of grateful students who later became influential in the fields of literature, education, history, religion, and government, an important contribution to Central America on the part of Milla.

Looking back on his student days, Rosa later evoked his feeling of wonderment during his association with Milla:

How I have engraved in my memory those days and that [special] day on which I met José Milla! It was a shady June afternoon; the Spring heat could be felt, and the quick Winter rains were falling. After having walked along the student promenade, the beautiful arbor of the Theater of Guatemala, formed by the fig and orange trees which perfumed the air with the rich odors of their thousands of flowers, I arrived, accompanied by Marce Aurelio Soto, at the modest home of Milla, who lived at that time near the Merced district. I arrived with all the timidity and even with the bashfulness to be found in a provincial student. I was about to fulfill a great wish; but I feared to meet something so great that it would enslave me, and that gave me trouble, a lot of trouble; but the cordial introduction of Soto, my beloved friend, and the good reception by Milla, that modest man, pleasant and civilized, made me forget right away my secret uneasiness, my student worries, motivated by the presence of the author whom I had admired through time and distance. . . .

Never will I forget the lessons that Milla gave us from five to six in the afternoon, in his study with the dying light of the setting sun that penetrated the clean glass of the windows of the room. He explained to us the precepts of the art of proper expression, the rules of the poetic art, and as a means of explanation, he reviewed the writings in prose and verse of the most famed of the classics of Spanish literature, which he knew profoundly. In me operated, if one can say such a thing, a work of absorption; I grappled all these lessons to the innermost of my thinking. . . .<sup>51</sup>

The role of José Milla as a teacher deserves to be studied in detail, for little enough has been written about that aspect of his career. His humanistic approach to education and the students was not new in 1867 when Rosa first met Milla. By that time, Milla had already selected a young man named Agustín Washington Gómez Carrillo to assist in the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and that young man after his association with Milla was the one who carried on Milla's interrupted history of Central America.<sup>52</sup> In July, 1862, an editorial comment in Milla's Hoja de Aviso urged the public to take part in the graduation ceremonies of a certain literary school: "We conclude exhorting these persons who have by virtue of an invitation been asked to these acts to dignify them with their attendance; thus, an important service will be lent the cause of illustration, stimulating the youth to study for in them will later be the deposit of light."<sup>53</sup> The poet Ramón Uriarte was particularly well-equipped with words to describe his own reaction as one of Milla's students:

An outstanding talent, an affable and kindly character, the heart of a child, soul of a giant, Milla will live in the memory of some who, like the editor of this GALLERY, had the luck to know him as a teacher and as a friend, which in him were two qualities in harmonious union. As for posterity, it will never forget his name.<sup>54</sup>

In that same year of 1867, Milla continued his busy pattern of activities already established earlier in his work for the newspaper. His Semana published in two numbers in January and February the regulation for the first theater in Guatemala, in the year 1794, and then it followed with twenty-four numbers on "Statistical Notices on the Kingdom of Guatemala, Collected by Virtue of the Royal Order of July 26, 1739."

The newspaper also announced with evident pleasure that Dr. Mariano Padilla of Guatemala had been named to represent his country at the International Congress of Anthropology and Prehistoric Archeology to be held in Paris in August,<sup>55</sup> an appointment which pointed up the early interest in prehistory that was shown in Guatemala. Milla had striven for years to invoke just such interest as that.

In the field of literature, Salomé Jil wrote a second historical novel, entitling it Los Nazarenos (The Penitents). As with The Daughter of the Adelantado, the second novel appeared by chapter installments in successive weeks. There were nearly double the number of chapters in The Penitents, so each installment was of three chapters instead of two. The novel began to appear in the issue of May 14, 1867, and the concluding chapters came in the issue of September 15, 1867, keeping the author busy for four full months of that year.<sup>56</sup>

Los Nazarenos was a romantic novel of the years from 1654 to 1657 with its setting in Santiago,<sup>57</sup> or Antigua, and the central theme was an unfulfilled love affair. The protagonist was Rodrigo de Arias, a young cavalier who had risen to the position of provincial governor at a very young age because of his distinction in the conquest of Costa Rica. Don Rodrigo was the leader of a group of plotters who disguised themselves as "Nazarenos," the penitents who dressed in sack cloth and marched in Holy Week processions. The heroine was Elvira de Legasti, wife of the adelantado of the Philippine Islands, and don Rodrigo of course fell in love with her. When Rodrigo's conspiracy failed, he was saved by the destruction of evidence against him by the daughter of a judge who loved



him too. Although he returned to the palace to his Elvira, she died in his arms. A priest, Brother Pablo, was able to miraculously restore her to life, but doña Elvira then decided very virtuously to remain faithful to her husband, leaving Rodrigo to join the order of Bethlehemites with Brother Pablo.

The novel bore the stamp of Salomé Jil's technique: the moralistic tendency was apparent, character sketching strong, action rapid and intense, good unity, a lively narrative and animated, but brief, dialogue, and great strength in local color. Supernatural phenomena were present, the novel began and ended with miracles, and Milla explained that as follows:

As for some of the supernatural events that will be read in this work, it is enough to say that we have taken them either from popular tradition or from the chronicles, and that we use them only as facts accepted by public opinion of that time in which they were said to have happened, for whatever there may be of the poetic or of dramatic interest in them.<sup>55</sup>

The historical basis for the story was the chroniclers and the Historia Bethlemítica (Madrid, 1723)--the History of the Bethlehemites--with an emphasis on "some of the famous people who figured in it."<sup>59</sup> Again, the idea was propagated in contemporary reviews that Milla had created a new national genre.<sup>60</sup>

To sustain his readers' interest, Salomé Jil published two other serials in the period after The Penitents was finished. In October and December, The Two Graces, or the Atonement, by the Spanishwoman and costumbrista writer, Fernán Caballero (Cecilia Böhl de Faber), appeared in several numbers of La Semana;<sup>61</sup> and, early the following year, the "Satirical and Burlesque Poems" by the Guatemalan Minister in Washington,

Antonio José de Irisarri were reproduced.<sup>62</sup>

José Milla continued to write biographical accounts of famous Guatemalan personalities, giving his impression of the colonial figure of Fray Matías Córdova in an address before the Economic Society on January 13, 1867.<sup>63</sup> It was hailed as a gala affair, at which the popular José Milla, a socio consultor, a counsellor, of the Economic Society took the main role:

ECONOMIC SOCIETY.--On the 13th day of the present month [January], there was held the distribution of prizes to students of local schools and to the exhibitors who presented their more notable productions in the recent exhibition. There was a large and select attendance, presided over by the President. The Philharmonic Society of amateur musicians enhanced the function by playing several pieces. After the reading of the list of awards, Advisory Member don José Milla read a speech in praise of Fray Matías Córdova, named a Member by Merit in 1797. His Excellency the President gave a brief and appropriate talk. We understand that these documents are to be printed in the newspaper of the Society, with reference to that ceremony, which has been the most outstanding of those that the society has celebrated in many years.<sup>64</sup>

That brief account in La Semana was witness of the importance of Milla in the contemporary social scene where he associated with President Cerna at the highest level of intellectual and social activity. At the same time, his role was that of the literary man as always, not that of an aristocrat born to such honors.

In the following year, Milla continued to take an active part in the renewed schedule of activities of the Economic Society, maintaining his office as a counsellor of the organization.<sup>65</sup> As such, he proposed that the teaching of agriculture be introduced, if only in theory, but his proposal was rejected after study by the Society. They did ask Milla to give more speeches praising the merits of former great men of Guatemala,

for he seemed to have become identified with the great-man theme of their history by that time. Finally, he served with Rafael Machado--who had reviewed his first novel--to make a study of the electoral law for deputies to present to the government for action.<sup>66</sup> Milla's name came up frequently in the affairs of the society throughout 1868, for he rendered the association constant service through his pen and through the resources, like newspaper printing space, that he commanded. In September, when the Smithsonian Institution of Washington sent some of its publications to the Economic Society, soliciting those of that organization in exchange, it was José Milla who was called upon to render the reply to that foreign association.<sup>67</sup>

Some small measure of international notice fell to Salomé Jil in 1868 too, as the fame of his sketches of customs reached countries outside Guatemala:

REPRODUCTIONS.--In the "Literary Part" of the Correo de Ultramar, an interesting newspaper that is published in Paris, adorned with many beautiful engravings, the Sketches of Guatemalan Customs by Salomé Jil have begun to be reproduced with a note containing a short and expressive eulogy. The editorial staff of that newspaper asked, through its agent in this city, permission of the author to make that reproduction, and it was granted, with thanks for that distinction on the part of such an accredited and interesting publication. Some of the Sketches have also been copied in various newspapers of South America.<sup>68</sup>

The Penitents had come out by October, 1867, in book form with 322 pages, from the Imprenta de la Paz,<sup>69</sup> and Salomé Jil rested a bit from his heavy schedule of writing in the ensuing months. In March, 1868, he took a four or five week vacation at his hacienda Quezada,<sup>70</sup> as he apparently did every year at that time, and when he returned he resumed his writing with a third historical novel, El Visitador (The Inspector-General).

Thirty-six weekly installments of the novel followed in Numbers 53 through 88 of the second volume of La Semana, without Salomé Jil missing a single number in that time! It was initiated on May 16, 1868, and finished on January 31, 1869, with the completed book edition being announced on June 20, 1869, in one volume of 552 pages, printed in the Imprenta de la Paz.<sup>71</sup> The Inspector-General was the longest of the novels of Pepe Milla, and by many of his critics it was considered his best.<sup>72</sup>

El Visitador, like its two predecessors, was staged in Antigua, purportedly encompassing the years of the second decade of the seventeenth century. Juan de Ibarra, a royal Spanish inspector-general with little if any scruples, hoped to replace the viceroy in office by the expedient of discrediting him with the king and the king's subjects. Inspector Ibarra was a bitter man with little faith in the integrity of mankind; his wife had run away with his best friend. Unable himself to rise above the base category to which he relegated human nature, the Visitador escaped on a ship when his plotting failed, leaving his cohorts to bear the brunt of the aftermath of intrigue. In plot, conception, execution, and reception, El Visitador varied not at all from the established pattern of La Hija del Adelantado and Los Nazarenos. Early in 1869, the Economic Society awarded a prize to a miniature painter for an original painting based on Chapter One of the Visitador,<sup>73</sup> as an example of the endeavor in fine arts in Guatemala.

To complete his schedule of writing for 1868, Milla also wrote a short biographical notice of Antonio José de Irisarri, upon the death of that famous diplomat,<sup>74</sup> and he did so with a skill that was apparent to

his contemporaries. Ramón Rosa noted an essential quality of moderation in Milla in that "Milla produced interesting biographical writings in which he never failed to achieve something of an aloofness from the political school, and a certain impulsive partiality that inspired friendship."<sup>75</sup> Rosa felt that Milla showed that same characteristic in his editorship of the Gazette over the years, and, of course, the kindly humor that Milla displayed in his social sketches had long been a personal trademark. José Milla's moderate approach to life was constantly apparent.

Two important editorials appeared in the pages of La Semana in 1868, both reiterating the ideology of José Milla with regard to the state of historical interest in Guatemala. The ideas expressed were not new to Milla, for they were refined from many similar observations made in speeches, editorials, short stories, and poetry in preceding years, but his self-imposed position as keeper of the public conscience with regard to Guatemala's rich historical heritage was reaching a period of synthesis:

PUBLICATION OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.--Frequently, we open our columns to some documents relative to the history of Guatemala in its least-known epoch: that comprising the period which transpired from the conquest to independence. Of those documents, some have been inedited, forgotten in the dust of archive and library; others, although printed many years before, have become so rare and so little known by the vast majority of people that pay some attention to these matters, that their present publication amounts to bringing them forth for the first time.

It is simple, in our opinion, to understand the importance of popularizing these data. Very few persons take the trouble of searching in the corners where time has buried those almost illegible originals, which, nevertheless, contain the most valuable data to judge what the country was in remote ages, so different from the present. Unfortunately, we lack a colonial history worthy of the name. Some works certainly of importance and useful have come to light on this subject, but they are not and could not have been more than copying of data and notices that will serve some day as a basis for writing history.<sup>76</sup>



The position of La Semana was that ". . . we have thought to extend a true service by collecting all the ancient documents that are found isolated and unknown in the country, especially those that have never been published, and we have proposed to save them from complete oblivion by leaving them printed in this publication."<sup>77</sup> From these statements it followed that Salomé Jil had not satiated his taste for historical expression with the publishing of the popular historical novels, short stories, and biographical sketches of great men of the historical past. Indeed, throughout the middle months of 1868, La Semana printed a steady stream of installments of historical documents, principally a memoir written by the historian Dr. Francisco de Paula García Peláez when he was parish priest in the town of Pinula in 1825, and the first volume of Francisco Fuentes y Guzmán's indispensable history of the Kingdom of Guatemala. By that time, José Milla was the country's main crusader for the development of the country's history, for his newspaper never let the public forget the importance to everyone to know more of the nation's past.

As the year of the presidential elections came around in 1869, the literary production of José Milla declined to nothing. With the termination of The Inspector-General at the end of January, Salomé Jil's pen fell silent, after the tremendous schedule of writing that he had maintained in the past four years. In July, La Semana could offer with pride a "complete" collection of his works:

HISTORICAL NOVELS, written by Salomé Jil. The following are offered at a discount for those who buy the Collection.

D. BONIFACIO, at three reals a copy.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE ADELANTADO, at eight reals.

THE PENITENTS, at twelve reals.

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL, at two pesos.<sup>77</sup>

Milla was also strangely mute in the social realm, for the Economic Society featured a speech on the Canon Doctor José María Castilla, Milla's boyhood benefactor, and, while it would have been a natural opportunity for Milla to speak out with the long-awaited statement on his reaction to Castilla, the one who delivered the address was Dr. Andrés Andreu.<sup>78</sup> That his personal popularity continued, however, was apparent in the appearance in June of a poem entitled, "Glory. (A composition dedicated to Mr. José Milla)" by "E. H."<sup>79</sup>

Historical documents continued to flow from the pages of the Semana, with a steady stream of edited and inedited documents appearing in every month except April, 1869, and continuing into September of the following year. A third important editorial, entitled "Writings on the Ancient Kingdom of Guatemala" appeared in July, 1869, expanding on former themes; it was written in conjunction with the beginning of a reproduction of a work called Hispano-American Library (Mexico, 1816). That work included a long and complete bibliography of Central American writings of the colonial period.<sup>80</sup> Of this the editorial said:

One question will doubtless occur to many of our readers upon seeing that extensive catalog of Guatemalan writers or of writings done in Guatemala: where are those publications, what has happened to them, which is the library, the national museum destined to protect those treasures of our ancient literary history? The reply is discouraging: they do not exist, they have vanished; the major part of them disappeared in our deplorable civil discords, which were as incapable of doing good as they were fruitful in disastrous results. Many of those writings disappeared with the former libraries of the regular convents, where they were cared for, as the work from which we take that data indicates.

It is worthy of attention that some of those works that to many of our readers appeared a bit futile have gone to Europe in the hands

of intelligent and curious bibliophiles who guard them with great concern. . . .

The troublesome years of the early post-independence period formed an era of Central American discord that Milla was never to forgive for the disaster that civil strife brought his country. As a good teacher and a patient worker, he turned to the repairing of the damage with a characteristic didactic approach to his newspaper editorials.

In 1870, Milla the teacher, still held the chair of Spanish Literature at the Academy of Studies of the College of Lawyers.<sup>81</sup> At the graduation ceremony in December, Milla gave the principal address on "Spanish Lyric Poetry." Never much of a poet himself, teacher Milla summarized his talk with his beliefs on the value of the art of poetry to the individual student:

Without giving the study of fine literature an exaggerated importance, I believe that it fulfills its confessed civilizing influence. Poetry ennobles the soul and counteracts the tendency toward material interests to which, unfortunately, the epoch we have attained renders an homage that borders on adoration. Poets soar, it is true, to an ideal world on wings of fantasy, frequently disregarding all the mundane earth. But in those creations which perhaps show man what he ought to be but is not, we learn to admire and come to accustom ourselves to seek to achieve that perfection of sentiment and of life that should be our constant aspiration on the earth. How we hope that our young academicians may have gained from their study of the classic poets that inclination to the beautiful, to the noble, and to the great, that will forever be one of the principal distinctions of superior souls.<sup>82</sup>

Milla sought to achieve superior results from his teaching. At the same time, he was perfectly willing to receive into his classes and to help a humble "provincial" like Ramón Rosa in 1867.

Salomé Jil's final literary product of the years between 1865 and 1871 came out in the Semana in a series of sketches which he entitled

Libre sin nombre. In the introductory to the newspaper chapters, Milla told that people were asking him why he did not write anymore,<sup>83</sup> so he determined to start another book. In casting about for a title of the book he was going to write, but had not really begun, he explained all the difficulties he had encountered. Then, he said:

For all the reasons given, and for all that remain unexplained, which is better still, I resolved that that work I am going to write will have no name. Not knowing yet myself of what it will treat, nor if it will come out regularly each week, or with interruptions more or less lengthy, I certainly cannot obligate myself to anything. The BOOK WITHOUT A NAME may complete the two or three hundred pages that I have projected, and it may fall silent at the halfway mark or a third of the way; and still. . . .<sup>84</sup>

So, the explanation continued in good fun, about the origin of the Libre sin nombre, the Book Without a Name, the fifth of Milla's novels to come out in his newspaper in weekly installments to fulfill the demand of his readers for humorous sketches of their society.

Thirty-one more short stories came out in seventeen numbers of La Semana, again without missing more than an occasional weekly issue. Salomé Jil met his deadlines and completed the book, so he might well have disregarded his fears and gone ahead and given it a name. The titles of the stories were in themselves an invitation to join in the fun with Milla: "The Lottery," "Flies," "Cards," "Poet, Doctor, and Madman," and "The Mirror," all held up to scrutiny the vices and virtues of human nature to permit the Guatemalans to see themselves. Circulation of the Semana increased with the initiation of the stories of Salomé Jil, and the readers were advised to get in their subscriptions at once for the numbers from 58 onward, which contained the first story on June 27, 1870.<sup>86</sup> With the Book Without a Name, Salomé Jil had certainly made the

recent years count with five books in six years, along with a heavy social schedule as Counsellor of State, constant editorial duties with the Gazette, teaching and speaking, writing miscellaneous articles, and numerous other activities.

#### The End of the Thirty-Year Regime, 1871

Turning from the pleasant stories of Salomé Jil to the more turbulent field of partisan politics, the year 1871 turned out to be a crucial one for the Conservative government. Justo Rufino Barrios and Miguel García Granados, bolstered by numerous small bands of armed men rallying to the cause of national liberation, began a final concerted effort against the government forces early in that year.<sup>87</sup> The absence of the military might of Carrera hurt the Conservatives, but Marshal Cerna himself took the field to oppose the Liberals. He was no match for their vigorous challenge; after thirty years of treason, as they saw it, they were not to be denied. President Cerna was defeated in the mountainous heights between Totonicapán and Quezaltenango on June 23, 1871, and that victory--won through the superior fire power of Remington rifles--was the beginning of a rout of the Conservative elements. In 1870 and 1871, José Milla was a participant in the legislative body, as well as a counsellor of state, for he had been elected a deputy for the Consulado de Comercio<sup>88</sup>--the guild merchant corporation held over in Guatemala from colonial times.<sup>89</sup> The defeat of Marshal Cerna was demoralizing to the conservative cause, and it was a courageous thing that Cerna could fight effectively at all with so great internal dissension in his officers, the capital politicians, and the clergy--the "baldheads"--under the archbishop.



Flushed with victory, the insurgents marched on Guatemala City, singing a song entitled, "Mother Vincent," composed by one of the poetically-inclined soldiers and calculated to deprecate the power of President Vicente Cerna's government. Mentioning only two leaders of the Conservative Party, its nominal head and its long-famed "bard," the soldiers of the army of liberation sang,

Forward my brave companions, and let us bravely tread  
The way with blood drops red, to glory, to victory.  
For when she heard the rattle of Remingtons in battle  
Old mother Vincent fled, from Totonicapán.

The boss of all the baldheads has got a bellyache  
And his legs begin to quake, at the shout of liberty.  
He knows that he is done for, and that he'll have to run for  
Old mother Vincent's fake, in Totonicapán.

Oh Guatemala City, how beautiful you lie,  
You would be free or die, like us heroes of the Heights,  
You too have had to reel, crushed by the tyrant's heel.  
Oh, mother Vincent, fly from Guatemala, too.

And now you dear Joe Willa can take your harp and sing,  
(Don't mind the broken string) your fallen idol's praise  
And to your doleful song, let old mother move along.  
She'll hardly try another fling, like Totonicapán.

The stupid folks called nobles, with all their coats of arms,  
Their titles, and their farms, that the people work for them,  
Will have to quit their airs, and kneel down and say their prayers,  
Or we'll set them in alarms like in Totonicapán.

We'll send sincere regrets to friars and monks as well.  
They couldn't work their sell and so their plot fell through.  
And when their "Fichnich" knave tried to kill our leaders brave,  
We sent him off to hell, from Totonicapán.

Let's sell the guns and cannon and whatever else we find,  
That the bandit left behind, and with the mon we get  
We'll buy old ma a dress, to hide her nakedness,  
For we must not be unkind, we of Totonicapán.<sup>89</sup>

After a decisive battle, won by the liberation forces at San Lucas in the nearby foothills just up from the plain on which Guatemala City

lay, the victorious forces entered the capital on June 30, 1871. Thereby, the so-called Thirty-Year Regime of the Conservative Party with all it stood for came to an end. The processes of government were at a standstill with Congress disbanded, government leaders in flight, and the treasury emptied. Hostile voices were raised against the conquered, among them the "bard" José Milla, but perfect order prevailed for García Granados set the mood of victory by saying,

No, no; be still. We desire death for no one. Liberty does not need blood in order to flourish. This is too grand and glorious a day to stain with such cries.<sup>90</sup>

In that atmosphere of tolerance, José Milla y Vidsurre, the beloved Salomé Jil, ex-counsellor of state and ex officio bard of the defeated Conservative Party, was able to depart from Guatemala into a period of voluntary exile abroad on July 18, 1871, philosophizing as he was wont that "mankind, while we wander through this valley of miseries, divide ourselves up into two groups: that which goes and that which stays."<sup>91</sup> Salomé Jil was off on another adventure, this time "a trip to the other world passing through other regions," which was to be the subject of not one but three volumes before many more years passed.

# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Historia de un Pepe, Don Bonifacio, prol. Ramón A. Salazar ('Colección "Juan Chapín"': 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1937), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>La Semana. Periódico Político y Literario, Guatemala, 1865-1871. Most biographical sketches of Milla cite this newspaper as having appeared in 1864, but this was not true. It appeared in three volumes of 100 numbers each: Volume I, Number 1 (January 1, 1865) to Number 100 (January 13, 1867); Volume II, Number 1 (January 26, 1867) to Number 100 (May 10, 1869); Volume III, Number 1 (May 18, 1869) to Number 100 (June 19, 1871). While it was to be published every Sunday, it came out on various days of the week. A single issue cost one real, with twelve numbers subscribed to by trimesters cost only six reals. The editor assisting Milla was J. H. Taracena, and the Semana was printed in the Imprenta de la Paz.

<sup>3</sup>Rosa, Oro de Honduras, I, 144.

<sup>4</sup>La Semana, January 8, 1865, pp. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup>Manuel Cobos Batres, Carrera (Guatemala [1935]), pp. 46-47.

<sup>6</sup>John L. Stephens, Incidents of travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan (London, 1842), I, 247-248.

<sup>7</sup>Cobos Batres, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>8</sup>Elisha Oscar Crosby, Memoirs of Elisha Oscar Crosby. Reminiscences of California and Guatemala from 1849 to 1864, ed. Charles Albro Barker (San Marino, California, 1945), p. 84. "Carrera was a very extraordinary man, by birth a pure native Indian. . . ."

<sup>9</sup>Op. cit., III, 125. <sup>10</sup>Stephens, op. cit. <sup>11</sup>Ibid., II, 135.

<sup>12</sup>Ephraim G. Squier, Travels in Central America (New York, 1853), II, 428-429.

<sup>13</sup>Mary P. Holleran, Church and state in Guatemala (New York, 1949), pp. 128-129. Chapter II, "The Conservative Interlude, 1839-1871," pp. 128-146, treats of the details of the Carrera period and of Cerna's relations with the Church. Pp. 310-311, offer a brief summary of events for that period.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 140; J. Lloyd Meecham, Church and state in Latin America (Chapel Hill, 1934), pp. 374, 389.

- 15 Weccham, *ibid.*, pp. 2, 374.
- 16 Cobos Batres, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
- 17 *La Semana*, April 23, 1865, p. 4. The poem was entitled "Al Gral. Carrera," and it was signed "J. M."
- 18 Bancroft, *op. cit.*, III, 414. The events of this period of history are to be found in this source from p. 413 ff.
- 19 Zamora Castellanos, *op. cit.*, p. 409 ff. This work can be used to advantage to check against the lack of precision in detail in Bancroft.
- 20 Bancroft, *op. cit.*, III, 416. Five other votes cast were scattered.
- 21 Montúfar, *Memorias*, pp. 408-414.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 409.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 410.
- 24 *La Semana*, March 11, 1866, p. 3.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *La Semana*, May 7, 1868, pp. 1, 2.
- 27 Burgess, *Barrios*, p. 62; Zamora Castellanos, *op. cit.*, p. 409. That battle reported in *La Semana* was actually Justo Rufino Barrios' baptism of fire, according to his biographer, and in Barrios, defeated on that occasion, lay the germ of the revolution that was in the making.
- 28 *La Semana*, March 2, 1867, p. 4.
- 29 *Ibid.*, January 1, 1865, pp. 3-4.
- 30 Ramón Uriarte, *Galería poética centro-americana* (2d ed.; Guatemala, 1888). "José Milla," II, 3-39, is the section of the second volume where a biographical sketch of Milla is to be found along with a selection of six of his poems.
- 31 *La Semana*, January 1, 1865, p. 4.
- 32 *Ibid.*, February 12, 1865, pp. 3-4.
- 33 Salomé Jil (José Milla), *Quadros de costumbres* ('Colección "Juan Chapín": 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1937), p. 447.
- 34 Salomé Jil (José Milla), *Libro sin nombre* ('Colección "Juan Chapín": 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1935), p. 227; Bancroft, *op. cit.*, II, 274-288. Bancroft devotes a chapter to the revolt of the Contreras brothers in 1550 in Nicaragua.
- 35 *La Semana*, January 14, 1866, p. 4.
- 36 *Ibid.*, December 31, 1865, p. 4.

37 Ibid., March 26, 1865, p. 3. Agustín Vidasurre died on the hacienda Quezada, falling accidentally into the trench of the wheel of a sugar mill.

38 La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (May, 1866), [61]-74. This review of the Economic Society came out in one bound volume of eighteen numbers (entregas) from January, 1866, until May, 1870. The volume purports to have 374 pages, but frequent errors in pagination occur so that number is suspect.

39 La Semana, April 8, 1866, pp. 3-4.

40 Ibid., July 9, 1866, p. 4.

41 Vela, op. cit., II, 405-406.

42 Ibid., p. 430.

43 Rafael Machado, "'La Hija del Adelantado' Novela Histórica por Salomé Jil," La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (June, 1866), 103-107; La Semana, July 30, 1866, p. 2, reproduced the same review.

44 Vela, op. cit., II, 393-398. Irisarri wrote an autobiographical novel, El Cristiano Errante, published in Bogotá in 1847. He also wrote a second novel entitled Historia del Periplo de Caminondas del Cauca, printed in New York in 1863, a biography of Simón Rodríguez, the tutor of Simón Bolívar. Both were picaresque novels with a rogue-hero.

45 Ibid., pp. 401-404. Montúfar Alfaro wrote the first historical novel of the country, El Alfórez Real, whose publication in serial form began in 1858.

46 La Semana, October 31, 1866, p. 2. This was a statement by Julio Rossignon, who shortly thereafter became a corresponding member of the Scientific Commission of Mexico and Central America for the French Ministry of Education. Ibid., November 11, 1866, p. 2.

47 Ibid., November 19, 1866, pp. 3-4; Uriarte, Galería poética, II, 18-29.

48 La Semana, November 28, 1866, p. 3; Uriarte, Galería poética, II, 12-17.

49 La Semana, December 16, 1866, pp. 3-4; Uriarte, Galería poética, II, 30-35.

50 Rufemiano Clares V., "José Ramón Rosa," Revista de la Universidad de Honduras, XVI (December, 1952), 67; García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, op. cit., p. 21; Vela, op. cit., II, 86; La Semana, December 3, 1867, p. 1; Rosa, Oro de Honduras, II, 405. The students Milla taught, Casanova, Batres, and Rosa, were enrolled in the Academia de Derechos Teórico-práctico y Administrativo, while the general body of



lawyers formed the Colegio de Abogados. Milla taught in the Academy of Studies of the College of Lawyers.

<sup>51</sup> Rosa, Oro de Honduras, I, 102.

<sup>52</sup> Vela, op. cit., II, 92.

<sup>53</sup> La Hoja de Avisos, July 11, 1862, pp. 1-2.

<sup>54</sup> Uriarte, Galería poética, II, 6.

<sup>55</sup> La Semana, April 10, 1867, p. 2. The Société Américaine de France, a founder of which was Brasseur de Bourbourg, had been established by 1858, but the more important First International Congress of Americanists was not held until 1875. See, Juan Comas, Los congresos internacionales de americanistas (Mexico, 1954), p. xiii.

<sup>56</sup> La Semana, May 14, 1867, pp. 3-4; Ibid., September 15, 1867, pp. 2-4.

<sup>57</sup> Salomé Jil (José Milla), Los nazarenos ('Colección "Juan Chapín"': 4th ed.; Guatemala, 1935), pp. 3-4.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 16. The first review was by Ricardo Casanova y Estrada, dated at Guatemala on April 27, 1868, and this was subsequently reproduced in many works as a preface or as an article.

<sup>61</sup> La Semana, II, No. 32 (October 10, 1867) to No. 39 (December 12, 1867).

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., January 23, 1868; February 7, 1868; and, April 21, 1868.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., February 10, 1867, pp. 3-4; La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (January, 1867), 170-180; Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala, VIII (September, 1931), 27-36. The speech, which has been reproduced many times, was entitled "Discurso en eulogio de Fr. Matías Cordova. . . ."

<sup>64</sup> La Semana, January 26, 1867, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., February 7, 1868, p. 2. Director Juan Mathen named as counsellors, Manuel F. González, José Milla, and honorary canon José Antonio Urrutia.

<sup>66</sup> La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (April, 1868), 249, 255, 263.

<sup>67</sup> La Semana, October 11, 1868, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., September 6, 1868, p. 2.

- <sup>69</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1867, p. 4.      <sup>70</sup>Ibid., March 1, 1868, p. 2.
- <sup>71</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1869, p. 4.      <sup>72</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 441.
- <sup>73</sup>La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (February, 1869), 338.
- <sup>74</sup>La Semana, July 18, 1868; July 25, 1868; August 2, 1868; Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia de Guatemala, XII (September, 1935), 85-96.
- <sup>75</sup>Rosa, "Don José Milla y Vidaurre," Revista de la Universidad [de Honduras], XI (1921), 187.
- <sup>76</sup>La Semana, May 16, 1868, p. 1.      <sup>77</sup>Ibid., July 4, 1869, p. 4.
- <sup>78</sup>Ibid., February 9, 1869, p. 2.
- <sup>79</sup>Ibid., June 12, 1869, p. 4. "E. H." was probably Eduardo Hall (1832-1885), born in Guatemala and deceased in New York. A romantic poet, consular representative, pianist, gentleman, and traveler, his is the only name which fitted the initials of the author of "La Gloria." See, Uriarte, Galería poética, II, 205-206.
- <sup>80</sup>Ibid., July 4, 1869, p. 1.      <sup>81</sup>Ibid., December 18, 1870, p. 2.
- <sup>82</sup>La Semana, December 18, 1870, p. 2.
- <sup>83</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Libro sin nombre, p. 23.
- <sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 25.      <sup>85</sup>La Semana, June 27, 1870, to January 29, 1871.
- <sup>86</sup>Ibid., July 3, 1870, p. 4.      <sup>87</sup>Bancroft, op. cit., III, 419-420.
- <sup>88</sup>N. J. Dardón, "Los fueros especiales. Fuero de comercio," Revista de la Universidad de Guatemala, I (April, 1878), 3-5; Haring, op. cit., 271-272, 321; Bancroft, op. cit., III, 282; Montúfar, Reseña histórica, VI, 294. The consulado de comercio was a corporation of merchants which enjoyed separate legislation and courts of law to expedite commercial matters. Established in Guatemala on December 11, 1793, by a Royal Letter, it was abolished by a law of June 22, 1826. Restored on August 13, 1839, by the Carrera-aristocrat-clergy coalition, the consulado was modified by laws of 1851, 1861, 1864, and 1866, as to the structure of its courts. The Liberal regime again abolished the consulate by decree on August 24, 1871, leaving mercantile courts in its stead. The Dardón article is excellent for a detailed explanation of the structure and history of the special fuero, or exemption from civil law, created in colonial Guatemala and carried over into the republican period under Carrera, whose administration granted it, among other privileges, that of two seats in the legislature.

<sup>89</sup> Burgess, Barrios, p. 79.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>91</sup> Salomé Jil (José Milla), Un viaje al otro mundo pasando por otras partes ('Colección "Juan Chapín"': 3d ed.; Guatemala, 1936), I, 8.

## CHAPTER VII

### SALOME JIL ACCEPTS THE CALLING OF HISTORIAN

My calling is the humdrum one of writing history and of trying to write it in such a way as to make it not only true but readable. It may not be a very creative form of literature, but at least it involves, like breaking stones, plenty of hard work. It involves the collection of a vast array of facts from a large variety of sources--it is really immaterial whether these are from original manuscripts or books, since the latter are only manuscripts already printed. It also involves the exercise of judgment; one has to weigh one's sources. And it demands a certain professional integrity and the application of rules which experience has shown to be necessary in assessing historical material. Beyond that the thing is comparatively simple; it requires merely time and industry--a large amount of both.

Arthur Bryant, Literature and the historian (1952)

#### José Milla Travels in the Other World, 1871-1874

At the height of his political and literary career, José Milla y Vidaurre was faced by the political upheaval of the year 1871, when the Conservative Party he had served for much of its thirty-odd years of political power was broken successfully for the first time by the Liberals under Miguel García Granados and Justo Rufino Barrios. As he had done in the year 1848, when the Liberals temporarily assumed the presidency, Milla again chose to follow his party into inactivity, this time into exile abroad.

That the conservative way of life was a thing of the past was attested to by the sweeping nature of the reforms which followed 1871. The general nature of those radical changes in government was discussed in the opening chapter of this study. José Milla, through his speeches,

writings, and conduct in the Economic Society and elsewhere, had frequently shown his desire to see progressive institutions fostered in Guatemala. However, the distinction between the liberal and conservative regimes of the nineteenth century seemed to lie in that the Liberals took positive action, while the Conservatives spoke of change but did little or nothing to implement their talk. A young, contemporary Liberal best echoed the fact that Milla's political antagonists recognized that he was very nearly acceptable to them, except for the fact that he had served in such a high office in the Carrera-Cerna regime:

Milla was dedicated to the administrative labors that were so extensive for him, since he had council, voice and vote in all branches of the Executive. Even though he might have been relegated to a secondary position, everybody understood that he was the light of that administration and perhaps, perhaps, the element with the most impetus toward change in the cabinet of which he formed a part.<sup>1</sup>

The Conservative Party brought stability to Guatemala out of the chaos of internal strife and armed conflict, but to do so, they employed a stable and inflexible regime that stifled ideas, initiative, or other means to achieve change and progress. A paternalistic, elite society was completely in character under those circumstances. The leaders, the very, very few elite Guatemalans, assumed for themselves the entire responsibility of government, instruction, and development of the processes of national life. Wanting a certain correctness and order, they followed a policy of do-it-yourself. It may have been a practical approach to the achievement of stability, but it was highly impracticable for so few to usurp the active participation of so many. The country needed broader representation and faster, more modern technological advancement to keep abreast with the march of world civilization.



Along with the system he supported, José Milla was guilty of trying to achieve the impossible. It appears that he was mistaken, for systems employing dictatorial means to control always crumble sooner or later in Latin America and therefore seem not the final answer to the needs of government. If he was mistaken, his error was an honest, steadfast, and patriotic one. He felt that the answer to chaos in government was military might like that commanded by Carrera, which he felt best suited the need of his times. In the absence of a great deal of faith in the ultimate right of free thought and free action in human society, strong-man government in Latin America will remain an attractive path of political action.

The times cried out for change, however, and it was not entirely the Catholic Church and the military and aristocratic entrenchment in power that was to blame. Republican societies have always called for change in control at periodic intervals, and the so-called Thirty-Year Regime had held office for over half the years since independence. Other societies than that of Guatemala have raised the cry of treason for less than that number of years of one-party rule, for political change has been a universally-desired phenomenon. By 1885, when Barrios died in office, the Liberals had literally changed the country by a face-lifting process of technological innovations<sup>2</sup> and the overhaul of basic social institutions--things of which José Milla's government had talked but never acted.

Milla himself did not attempt to remain on the scene under the new regime, although many other men of his camp made the transition well enough. Instead, he turned to exile in the United States and Europe until

passions had cooled to the point where he could return to his homeland, the beloved patria. After departing from Guatemala City on July 18, 1871, he spent the next three years and four months traveling in the "other world" outside Guatemala. Fortunately, being a writer and having a characteristic tendency to keep good records, Salomé Jil set down a careful account of the events of that period of time. Otherwise, it was one of the least known and least documented periods of his adult life, for, after 1871, his star seemed to have set. His name no longer appeared in the newspapers for several years, not even in a negative manner through censure by his political enemies. An admirer later summarized that period in a poem by saying that, "The bitter gall of ostracism, / Distant from your land and family, / You endured, and with silent dignity / Repaid iniquity and injustice."<sup>3</sup>

While some political exiles might have left high office with anger and bitterness, not so José Milla. Nor did he intend to travel alone into exile and the lonely existence of hotel rooms, trains, and steamers. He created a rustic traveling companion out of the stuff of his native land, naming him Juan Chapín, a kind of ventriloquist's aid for sounding out a Guatemalan common man's outlook on the lands through which his travels took him. His aim was to take with him a personality who ". . . represents the common people of my country, with his natural keenness and doubts, when placed face to face with the civilization of the great and advanced nations."<sup>4</sup>

For the reader of the account of those years, it was far from a lonely exile. Rather, it was a hilarious excursion filled with educa-

tional entertainment, not anything different than Guatemalans had come to expect from the irrepressible humor of Salomé Jil. Juan Chapín, the personification of the name traditionally given those born in Guatemala City, almost declined to go on the trip. After he had arrived at the stagecoach with his serape on his shoulder, a roast chicken, French bread and sausage in hand, Chapín nearly reneged on his desire to accompany Milla to the "other world" because he said he was too young to die, mistaking the "other world" to be death. He felt better when he learned that it meant Europe, and especially that it meant a trip to the United States, England, and Europe, although he preferred to land in France because "there at least they are Christians."

From the moment of that departure until their return to Guatemala, these two travelers had a world of fun over the institutions of foreign peoples. Chapín continued to resist becoming cultured in any way, but Milla was able to gently smooth his ruffled feathers when the foreigners became too much for his patience. Bit by bit, Chapín became accustomed to travel, especially because he was very smart and could easily acquire foreign languages as he explained to Milla in the following passage:

"Sir," he told me, "to what hotel are we going? If there happens to be one here where they speak Spanish, it would be better to go to it because, although I speak English, which I learned with the boyes /boys/ on the boat, which I afterward perfected in San Francisco and on the train, I think that these people /in the United States/ have forgotten it since I do not understand anything they say to me, nor do they understand a single word of mine."<sup>5</sup>

Embarking from Central America for San Francisco, California, Milla reached that city in September, 1871, and a week later he boarded a train for New York. In his transcontinental itinerary were included

the main cities across the country, each described dutifully for his readers in the later volumes written on the trip. During that trip, he and Juan Chapín just missed the disastrous Chicago fire of that year by two nights. They spent Christmas in New York City, leaving by boat for England in June, 1872, after spending from mid-October until early June in New York. Sleeping one night in Southampton, they continued to Paris, where they arrived on June 18, 1872. That European capital was to be their headquarters for the remainder of the time. In January, 1873, Milla made a trip south to Rome and saw the principal Italian cities, remaining in Italy for Holy Week of that year. He returned to Paris by way of southern France and Brussels, Belgium, at mid-year, but returned to Nice to spend some days in mid-December, 1873. In 1874, he was in London twice, and, finally, at the beginning of October of that year, he had the following conversation with Chapín:

"It is time now, friend Chapín, that we undertake the return trip to Central America. For three years and three months we have traveled the lands and plowed the seas. We have seen the great city that the enterprising spirit of the North Americans has founded on the beaches of the Pacific, elevating it in a short time to a high level of prosperity. Crossing the transcontinental railway, one of the marvels of the century, we afterwards visited the rich and populous New York, the metropolis of the North American Union. We have covered a great part of France, seeing the principal cities from the frontier of the North to the Pyrenees; from the beaches of the English Channel to the Alps. Making our headquarters in Paris, a city full of attractions for those seeking the pleasures of the mind and for those who want material pleasures, we went out many times from that great center of movement and of European life, to see Italy, land of art and classic mementos, all of which we saw except Sicily; to know the industrious, prosperous, and well constituted Belgium, and to a part of England, staying in London, the greatest city and in many respects the first city of the world.<sup>6</sup>

Chapín agreed with him, but regretted that the Carlist upheaval taking place in Spain had prevented them from seeing that country, which

had so influenced the writings of Salomé Jil in his works published to that time. That opportunistic peasant, Juan Chapín, immediately began to cast about for a means to raise himself in his own society by writing of the trip upon their return. He told Milla that he was going to summarize his notes of the trip and publish them under a nom de plume, or "telegram." Milla told him that would be a rather brief account in such form, and that he probably just ought to follow Caesar's veni, vidi, vici:

"That is not what I am saying," replied my companion, "but rather that I will reverse my family name, as for example: Pincha, in place of Charín. Isn't that what is called a telegram?"

"Anagram you mean," I observed.

"Ana or tela, it little matters," he said; "the grama /grass, or green stuff/ is what we are talking about here."<sup>7</sup>

Leaving England in October, 1874, the travelers embarked for Central America, by way of the Azores, Barbadoes, Jamaica, Panama, and the Central American ports in the Pacific. At the end of November, they at last reached Port San José, Guatemala, and proceeded to Guatemala City where the voyagers to the other world parted company, each having reached the end of the journey with a manuscript of notes on the trip. José Milla had based his manuscript account on ". . . notes, composed of descriptions, statistical data, serious observations, in fact, just what a person of advanced years naturally should write, and that he had proposed to do to make the foreign nations a little better known to these Central Americans who had not had the opportunity to visit them."<sup>8</sup> Chapín's manuscript was so full of nonsense that Milla ordered it burned in the kitchen.

In 1875, the three-volume account of the years of exile abroad finally appeared under the title of Un viaje al otro mundo pasando por otras partes, 1871 á 1874 (A Trip to the Other World Passing Through Other



Regions, 1871 to 1874). Milla's cook carelessly neglected to burn Juan Chapín's manuscript, and, even worse, sent off the two accounts to the printing press mixed together. That explained the mixture of the non-sensical and the serious in Milla's three volumes of travel accounts! In their writing, author Milla had lost none of the characteristics he had developed prior to exile, but he simply adapted himself and his writing to his new status. Through Juan Chapín he represented his own humor and the local color of his country, the American and European cities and social institutions furnished didactic material for Milla to bring home to his readers, and the style of the three volumes remained narrative. Hailed as one of his greatest creations by critics, it could only have been up to what he already represented for it was merely a modification of subject matter. Of course, being a good journalist, he knew that to write of a Guatemalan, or two, in Europe was copy that would sell at home.

Little factual knowledge has been available regarding José Milla's economic activities during his exile. He evidently did work during his residence in Paris as a subordinate editor of the illustrated magazine called in Spanish, El Correo de Ultramar,<sup>9</sup> a publication with which he had been acquainted through his journalistic career since at least 1849. His invitation to write for that paper came from its managing editor, a Mr. Mourgues, an important figure in the Hispanic-American press world.<sup>10</sup> Another friendship made in France was that with the positivist leader there, Maximilien Paul Emile Littré.<sup>11</sup> Since his visit to France arose out of his political exile, that experience was not a topic for discussion later on when he had begun to reside in Guatemala once more.

José Milla's Commission to Write a  
Colonial History, 1876-1879

Milla returned to his hacienda Quezada at Jutiapa, and there he turned to writing, which was still his foremost ability since he had lost out completely in the political arena. With the three volumes of the travel account, he began a busy publishing schedule anew. His return attracted little attention until September, 1875, when his name again appeared in the publications of the Economic Society. He wrote a biographical notice of the Conservative, Juan Matheu, whom he had known well.<sup>12</sup> It was a eulogy of Matheu as a devoted and dedicated public servant, a favorite theme of José Milla who considered that to have been his political role too. The significance of the biographical article was great, for he was again performing public services by the invitation of those men before whom he had gone into exile. The account of his biography on Matheu explained: "The Government Junta having resolved to publish the biography of Juan Matheu, the task of that writing fell to Assistant Member José Milla, who, because of the necessity of gathering the essential data and because of his many personal activities, has not been able to fulfill the wishes of the association before this time."<sup>13</sup>

The following year of 1876 was an important one for José Milla. His writing schedule of a book a year was adhered to faithfully with the appearance of his Memorias de un abogado (Memoirs of a lawyer). It was a novel set in the early part of the nineteenth century, as Milla made the effort to bring his literary work up closer to the present. He showed that he was aware of the popularity of the realistic school of novelists, whom he attempted to imitate without great success. The leading character



José Batres y Montúfar



Luis Molina



Lorenzo Montúfar

Fig. 4.--Liberal Friends of José Milla

was Francisco Roxel, who was falsely condemned to the gallows for the murder of his uncle whom he had not killed. He was saved when his neck failed to be broken, and he determined to defend from that time on those condemned to death in the capital city. That oath eventually led him to the defense of the man who ravished his fiancée, Teresa Mallén. His passionate plea on behalf of the murderer, made the day following the death of the girl, brought commutation of his sentence to life imprisonment.

A serious defect in the novel was that the hero's inordinate loyalty to his oath, even in the face of his great moral indignation, made him spiritually repulsive and not heroic.<sup>14</sup> The strength of the work lay in the characteristics long before established as part of Milla's art: his knowledge of history, his ability to sketch romantic intrigues, and his great command over the portrayal of local customs.<sup>15</sup> In certain parts of the novel, like the denunciation of the early nineteenth-century prison conditions, Milla wrote like the realists of the Zela school. Otherwise, he was the romanticist as always, and, in that sense, he showed that he remained a part of the past.

On November 17, 1876, there appeared in the official Liberal newspaper, called El Guatemalteco (The Guatemalan), instead of the former Gazette, the notice of the commissioning of José Milla to compose a history for the government of Guatemala. It was an interesting announcement, reproduced in its entirety as follows:

SECRETARIAT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION. Resolution in which José Milla is named to write the history of Central America.  
National Palace: Guatemala, November 11, 1876.

The President, taking into consideration the convenience that the

history of the country in the period from the discovery and conquest by the Spaniards to Independence be written; keeping in mind that the few attempts of this kind that have come to public attention are incomplete and, in fact, cannot be considered except as collections of data for history; it being a notorious fact that a work of that nature cannot be undertaken except with the aid of the Government; finding adequate means for the carrying out of this work by José Milla, and realizing the importance of a work like this which will comprise a period of three hundred years time, resolves: 1° To commission José Milla to write the History of Central America from the discovery and the conquest by the Spaniards until Independence; 2° The National Library and public offices where useful documents for the History are to be found, will place them at the disposition of Mr. Milla, keeping a record of those that have been supplied him so that they may be returned in due time; 3° Assign to the person commissioned to write the History, the sum of one hundred and fifty pesos a month from the past September 20, and, in order that he may carry the volumes to completion, the Government will print them in that number considered convenient and will give the author a fourth of the copies by way of remuneration for his work; the remainder to be at the disposition of the Government to defray the cost of publication.

--To be published.--Signed and sealed by the President.--Macal. 16

After years of championing the cause of the writing of colonial history, José Milla was at last appointed as official historian, but under the Liberal Party of President Justo Rufino Barrios and not under the conservative regime that he had served so faithfully.

From the statement of that government resolution, as well as the forlorn cries that had gone up over the years for the composition of a formal and adequate history of the colonial past of Guatemala, it was apparent that there was need for a history of the Kingdom of Guatemala--substantially the area of the Central American Isthmus, including the five independent republics that had emerged in 1821. Dr. Mariano Gálvez during his Liberal regime in the opening years of independence had recognized that need. He commissioned Dr. Francisco de Paula García Peláez to write the history of the captaincy-general from the conquest



to independence in 1821, and he named Dr. Alejandro Marure to continue that work up to the year 1834. García Peláez completed a three-volume study, which was printed in Guatemala City in 1851 and 1852, but it was an aimless compilation of data without any narrative content.<sup>17</sup> Marure completed in two volumes his Bosquejo histórico de las revoluciones de Centro-América, desde 1811 hasta 1834 (Historical sketch of the revolutions of Central America, from 1811 to 1834) for printing in Guatemala in 1837.

Except for the publication of García Peláez's work, no significant historical work of any breadth appeared during the Thirty-Year Regime of Rafael Carrera. After 1871, President Barrios determined that his country would not be the only country in the civilized world without a history, and he commissioned Milla to write a competent history of the colonial period and Lorenzo Montúfar to continue Marure's history from 1834 to the present.<sup>18</sup> The state of the country's historical resources in 1876 had not changed or improved over the lamentable conditions described by Milla's newspapers a decade or more earlier.

At the time that José Milla was commissioned to make the study that García Peláez had failed to adequately do, his selection for the post seemed almost a foregone conclusion. He had behind him successful historical novels and tales of the colonial epoch which were based on an intimate knowledge of the documentation of that period. His newspaper columns had been in effect an agent for the amassing of the most outstanding array of edited and inedited manuscripts that had come to the attention of the Guatemalan public. He had already shown that his

judgment of history was accurate, and he certainly had passed the test of producing readable and entertaining history. His own tremendous enthusiasm and personal industry in writing were known by all.

While the liberality of Barrios in inviting Milla back into the fold to perform another public service for Guatemala was praiseworthy, there should have been no doubt in anyone's mind that the country was receiving the services of the best potential historian available to write the history of the colonial period. It was the mark of Milla as a patriotic and devoted public servant that he accepted the commission from the Liberals, in order to put to use the talents and knowledge that he had been developing for so many years under the Conservative regime. With a salary of 1,800 pesos a year, probably about what he had received as a minister of state under Carrera and Cerna,<sup>19</sup> José Milla, working at his hacienda Quezada, undertook to become a professional historian. It was a direction in which he had been moving, either consciously or unconsciously, for many years.

The vast amount of documents that had been accumulated and preserved by the various administrative and municipal departments, by the convents and churches, and by public libraries had been ordered at the disposal of Milla by the government resolution naming him to write the history of Guatemala to 1821. By the declaration of independence and by the suppression of the religious powers under Barrios, all those documents had become the property of the government. Manuscripts were scattered throughout many archives and public and private libraries, but the principal collections remained in five places: the National Archives

held the documents of the colonial administration of the Captaincy-General; the archives of the Audiencia, the high colonial court of justice, were in the palace of justice; the archives of the Municipality contained valuable works, among them Bernal Diaz's True History of the Conquest; the Library of the University was important; and, the Library of the Economic Society, later the foundation of the National Library, possessed rich manuscript and printed materials.<sup>20</sup>

Principal manuscripts and printed works existed from the writing of the early chroniclers, who Milla had cited in the prefaces to his historical novels, and from the pens of the many ecclesiastical historians who had resided in Guatemala during the colonial era. Catalogues of the available works of the university and Economic Society holdings existed, and from those could be seen the principal sources later cited by Milla as his basic guides.<sup>21</sup> At that time, with regard to the materials contained in that body of documentation, it was said that,

Their extent and importance are but imperfectly known, but, to judge from what scientific travelers occasionally report, from what we glean from the works of the few native scholars which have reached the scientific world abroad, and from what I have seen myself during a month's sojourn in the capital, it is safe to say that they contain many rare and unique documents whose study would considerably extend our knowledge of the history of this continent, particularly regarding the periods of the conquest and of the Spanish dominion, and also of the condition of the country and people before the conquest.<sup>22</sup>

Faced with the task of reviewing and correlating the great volume of documentation for the three hundred years of history of the Kingdom of Guatemala, José Milla turned to the humdrum occupation of the historian. Reportedly, the amount of materials that Milla actually took with him to his plantation Quezada amounted to four trunks of books and manuscripts,

including all the books and documents of the various listings available at that time.<sup>23</sup> These materials were later returned to the government to become part of the collection of the present-day National Library of Guatemala. Milla later pointed out in the preface to his first volume of history, he had had to search much further than that simple beginning.

From September 20, 1876, when his commission as historian began, until September 15, 1879, the date that he wrote the prologue to the first of his volumes written under government patronage, practically no mention of José Milla was to be found in the newspapers, in the university and private reviews, or in the other public sources. During those three years, José Milla must have been absorbed in his task and, unlike the heyday of his years at the head of Conservative activities before 1871, took little if any part in social and political life in Guatemala.

After he wrote his introductory statement for the first volume in September from the hacienda Quezada, Milla's Historia de la América Central desde el descubrimiento del país por los españoles (1502) hasta su independencia de la España (1821). Precedida de una "Noticia Histórica" relativa á las naciones que habitaban la América Central á la llegada de los españoles (History of Central America from the discovery of the country by the Spaniards (1502) until its independence from Spain (1821). Preceded by a "Historical Notice" relating to the nations that inhabited Central America upon the arrival of the Spaniards) was printed at government order in "El Progreso" press in Guatemala City in 1879. The History of Central America was soon offered for sale in the government newspaper in January, 1880, the author's copies being placed on sale first at two

pesos a copy in a paper-covered volume.<sup>24</sup>

Milla composed a very concise six-page prologue to the first volume of his History, and it served both to outline the bibliographical basis upon which it was founded and to reflect his thinking with regard to what he felt the work ought to be. Milla did not append a bibliography, leaving the prologue and the footnotes to indicate his sources. While reference was made to the ample coverage afforded by the principal works available to Milla, his own description showed that his arrangement of the source material was not at all orderly:

I soon learned that having acquired some time ago a certain acquaintance with the historians and chroniclers was not enough; and, in order to carry out the task given me with sufficient accuracy, it became necessary to undertake a true study of those ancient codices.

It has been necessary for me, then, to read, meditate, and compare one with another the voluminous general histories of the Indies by Herrera, Oviedo y Valdés, Torquemada &c, that of the conquest by Bernal Diaz, ó Díez del Castillo, whose editions differ substantially in many points from the original; the special chronicles of Guatemala, manuscripts for the most part, in which it is necessary to seek data relating to civil history among the agglomeration of news referring to the activities of the religious orders that evangelized the country; the narrations of the conquests of New Spain and of Peru, related in some points with that of Central America, and many other works where materials are to be found which serve to form the history of this section of the New World.

The chronicles of the regulars, (Remesal, Vazquez, Ximenez, Isaage histórica &c.) written in a diffuse and tiresome style; that of the councilman of the ancient city council of Guatemala, don Francisco de Fuentes y Guzman, which to that same defect adds the lack of chronology and accuracy and little truth in many of the deeds that it relates; the Historia de la ciudad de Guatemala by Domingo Juarros, that in large part is but a copy of the fabulous Recordacion by Fuentes; the Memorias by the Archbishop Garcia Palaez, a confused accumulation of news without any chronological order; the Proceso made in Mexico in 1529 against Pedro de Alvarado; the letters of the latter, inserted in the collection of Barcia; those of Hernán Cortes, collected and completed by Gayangos; the Actas del antiguo ayuntamiento de Guatemala, transcribed by Arévalo; the works of the celebrated bishop of Chiapas, fray Bartolomé de Las Casas and the impartial Reflexiones of his impugner the Abbé Nuix; the Informe directed to the King of Spain in 1576 by the judge Garcia del Palacio;



the first and only volume of the Historia del Nuevo Mundo by Juan B. Munoz; the Varones ilustres by Pizarro y Orellana; the Teatro eclesiástico de las Indias occidentales by Gil Gonzalez Dávila; the Historia de la conquista del Itza y el Lacandon by Villagutierre; the Política Indiana by Solórzano; the extensive Colección de Viajes by Navarrete; the no less voluminous Documentos inéditos del archivo de Indias by Pacheco, Cárdenas and Torres de Mendoza; the Vida y viajes de Colon by Washington Irving; the notices relative to the ancient Kingdom of Alcedo, in the Memorial de Indias by Diaz de la Calle, in the work entitled Facti novi orbis by Morell, and many other writings that would take much reference. . . .<sup>25</sup>

After tracing the general plan of the work, he realized that it would be necessary to tell something of the people that inhabited the land upon the arrival of the Spaniard, as well as to point out Spain's own circumstances in the days of discovery and colonization as a key to how these functions were carried out. Information on the Indian civilization came from the works already cited, but, in addition, Milla turned to the Popol-Vuh, the Cakchiquel codex, the works of his friend Brasseur de Bourbourg, and to the writings by the foreign travelers like Ternaux-Compans, Stephens, Squier, Charencey, Baldwin, and many others who published on the history, archeology, and linguistics of the Central American aborigines.

In his first volume, Milla covered the pre-Columbian era, a brief sketch of fifteenth-century Spanish institutions at the time of discovery, and the conquest and colonization down to 1542 in Central America. The sixty-six pages he devoted to the pre-Columbian population illustrated that he was in step with the movement then under way to elaborate the anthropological background of ancient civilizations, but the content of what he was able to glean from current sources did not hold up favorably over succeeding years. Nine pages devoted to Spain and her despotic

regime at the time of discovery were based mainly on Prescott's study of Ferdinand and Isabella and Lafuente's general history of Spain, and the remainder of the work in three hundred and forty-two pages related in a strictly narrative way the early years of the Kingdom of Guatemala. Milla employed an easy, clear, and careful style in his writing, showing his sources frequently, and all in all wrote a dependable narrative history of the events of those years.

The first volume was reviewed as "An Important Book," in the review of the Economic Society, and Milla was praised for his newly acquired status as a historian:

The agreeable painter of national customs, the elegant poet, the sparkling novelist, the detailed voyager, now inscribes his name in the book of the historians, bringing us to know of the vicissitudes of our early forebears in Central-America. . . .

The work will be made up of five or six volumes, to judge by the period of forty years, from 1502 until 1542, that the first volume comprises.

Mr. Milla will carry forward his noble task, carrying out the progressive thinking of an enterprising leader who wishes to give Central America her own history, as previously he has given his country national laws.<sup>26</sup>

Another note in the news organ of the Economic Society two months later hailed the work of "member" José Milla in utilizing the ethnographic and numismatical materials of the society's library,<sup>27</sup> evidence of the growing acceptance of Milla by some segments of society under the Liberal regime.

#### Salomé Jil Again Takes Up His Pen, 1880-1882

Milla's three years of silent, patient work as a historian were at last bringing him dividends. With the appearance of that first volume of the History, José Milla began to emerge into public life after the obscure years since 1871. He continued his work with the second volume

of the proposed colonial history from 1542 on, but he also took up other activities, more like his former self.

In 1880, when the Liberals established a Special Government Commission to plan and install a national exposition for 1882, José Milla was named a member of the Section of the Editorial Staff and Press, along with Mark J. Kelly, the recent founder of the important daily newspaper, the Diario de Centro-América.<sup>28</sup> About that same time, the Diario announced that three Guatemalans had been elected to the Academy of Fine Arts of Santiago, Chile, and reminded the public that José Milla and Lorenzo Montúfar, among others, already belonged to that distinguished society.<sup>29</sup> In December, 1880, continuing its policy of publicizing Milla, the Diario de Centro-América editorialized on "An Important Collaboration," telling of its attempt to gain the writing support of author Milla to further its policy of finding the best available talent for its readers:

Naturally we turned to the illustrious Guatemalan writer, José Milla, whose literary products are rightly savored in all of Spanish America, but the projects of the distinguished writer, the distance he has lived from the capital city for some months, and other less important circumstances, combined to deprive our readers of the offerings of the elegant and correct pen of "Salomé Jil." But, putting to one side the excuses of Mr. Milla, we have insisted in getting his worthy collaboration, and today we announce with particular pleasure that we have succeeded in overcoming certain difficulties presented and offer to the readers of the DAILY / Diario / from now on the reading of frequent articles from the fertile pen of Mr. Milla. His promise to us is for Sketches of Customs, serious and non-serious Articles, and a Novel of Customs that he will begin immediately for the DAILY. Tomorrow we will present the first article of a series on "The Population of Guatemala from 1604 to our time," in which all the attempts that have been made to take a Census, from that time of the colonial government, will be noted.

We congratulate ourselves for having secured this important collaboration and we congratulate the readers of the DAILY for our being able to provide them frequently with the amiable and humorous Sketches of Salomé Jil.<sup>30</sup>

Salomé Jil, after years of silence, still commanded respect with Guatemalan newspaper readers, and Mark Kelly well realized that fact, hoping through the pen of Salomé Jil to improve the circulation of his daily.<sup>31</sup> For José Milla, Kelly's interest and patronage offered a wedge to re-enter the journalistic world where he had spent the happiest years of his life. At the age of fifty-eight, José Milla again began to compose newspaper stories, writing under his old pen name of Salomé Jil. A young boy who ran copy for Milla when he worked for the Diario from December, 1880 on, gave the following description of the author in the last years of his life:

The author of Los Nazarenos would have been when we knew him about 57 or 58 years old. He was short, of robust complexion, of agreeable features which revealed a wonderful kindness; an intelligent forehead, straight hair and well-groomed mustache, he wore plain but at the same time elegant suits, being accustomed to wear a frock coat bordered with a fine black silk band; he always took special care to wear a clean collar, an elegant black tie, and highly polished shoes.

He used to like to smoke a cigar, and, upon seating himself to write, he placed it upon a tiny metal ashtray.<sup>32</sup>

Milla's photographs revealed that he was portly, balding, with rather full features, and a firm chin. In his earlier days he had sported a Vandyke beard, but that was changed to heavy sideburns and a mustache by 1880.<sup>33</sup> He gave every appearance of being, in body and dress, a very dapper fellow.

Installed once again in the publishing business as a writer for the Diario de Centro-América, Milla's name appeared with frequency in the news events of the day, as well as in by-lines over his articles and stories. The promised interesting study, "The population of Guatemala from 1604 to our own days," appeared in the Diario on December 4, 1880,

as Kelly had said it would, being concluded in the following number on December 6. Somewhat earlier, in October and November, Milla had written another historical article on "Lacandon and Itza Expedition. Historical Episodes from 1555 to 1697,"<sup>34</sup> and early in January, 1881, he followed those two studies with a third article on "Mines. Historical News and Anecdotes on their exploitation in the country."<sup>35</sup>

In May, 1881, the Diario de Centro-América editorialized on the announced meeting of the International Congress of Americanists scheduled for Madrid in September, 1881. The Guatemalan delegate under the Cerna government in 1867 had been Dr. Mariano Padilla, but under the Liberals José Milla was named as delegate in Guatemala.<sup>36</sup> All persons with an interest in the history of the Americas were urged to contact Milla if they wished to join that association which had members in both the Old and the New Worlds. The agenda of the international meeting comprised history, archeology, geology, anthropology, and linguistics of America, particularly of those epochs prior to the European discovery by Columbus.<sup>37</sup> Milla was a learned and famous personality, and the Liberal Party were apparently perfectly willing to make use of his talents.

In the months after December, 1880, when editor Mark J. Kelly told of Milla's agreement to write for the Diario, Salomé Jil had been busily engaged in writing a new series of sketches of customs. He began his Sketches in early December with "The Adventures of Uncle Climas," a Guatemalan farmer who came to the annual Jocotenango Fair in Guatemala City and served as an instrument for more good-natured humor and sketches of Guatemalan life by Milla. Then he followed with other sketches of



customs, in the tradition he had already made famous, and wrote a series under the general heading of "El Canasto del Sastre" ("The Tailor's Basket"). Milla alternated the stories of the two series throughout 1881, finishing the last story in January, 1882. All of the sketches of customs appeared in the Diario de Centro-América, and, when they finally were printed in a single volume first-edition in 1924, they had the title of El Canasto del Sastre (The Tailor's Basket).

Along with his second volume of the History, his historical articles and sketches of customs, José Milla found the time to turn again to teaching. His post was a marriage of extremes for a man who was state historian, ex-University professor under the Conservatives, and author par excellence, for he took up the job of secondary school teacher in the Colegio "La Enseñanza," a school for children from five to twelve years of age.<sup>38</sup> Only a moderate and modest man like Milla could have accepted such a post, because it was a real set back in life for him. The announcement of the appointment of Milla as professor of the history of Central America to independence came in February, 1881, at the beginning of the school year. One of his students recalled years later the character of his teacher, showing that Milla had continued to be the mellow and kindly professor:

Salomé Jil was extremely kind. Neither the misfortunes of life nor the unpleasanties that the illustrious writer suffered in his last years were enough to change his affable outlook and his humorous way. Two or three years before he died, I knew him in the renowned school, "La Enseñanza," in which he taught the classes of the History of Central America and of Castilian grammar for some time. I had the pleasure of finding myself among the group of his disciples, who young men that we were, were more disposed to play than to hear the wise and pleasant explanations of the venerable maestro. Nevertheless, he never became angered with us but rather treated us with the greatest of con-

sideration and with the most solicitous affection. . . . Thus, he was always: kindly, affable, jovial.<sup>40</sup>

Beginning in April, 1882, Salomé Jil began his last novel for the Diario de Centro-América, calling it the Historia de un pepe (Story of a foundling). The novel came out in the daily in a steady flow of copy during the months of April, May, and June, being complete in thirty-eight chapters on June 23, 1882. In it Mills again attempted to follow the realistic school of novelists, but his orientation was so strongly romantic that he failed to achieve that aim, as he had failed with the Memoirs of a lawyer six years earlier.<sup>41</sup> While he sought a realistic exposition of his story, what resulted was that he wrote another romantic novel of adventure and intrigue. It served to amuse his public and himself, but that was all.

The narrative opened in the year 1792 in Guatemala City, the capital city which had been moved from Antigua in 1776. The main character was Gabriel, a foundling (pepe) raised by a middle-class family. Actually, he was the son of a bandit chief. Gabriel received huge sums of money from his father whose identity he did not know, learning of his parent and what he was only when that bandit died. Nobly, Gabriel set about restoring their wealth to all those robbed by his father. Gabriel had a faithful sweetheart named Rosalía, and, when all seemed lost due to his need to rectify his father's misdeeds, Gabriel suddenly and unexpectedly inherited a sufficient fortune from a maternal uncle to enable the young couple to marry.

That last effort of Salomé Jil in the field of the novel was not received as favorably by the critics as his earlier works had been.

Probably, Milla was in a period of decadence due to the hardships of the past years in which he had seen such sudden and radical changes in his political and economic fortunes. Most accounts of Milla mentioned that he was still subject to fairly constant attack by his contemporaries, particularly those who would not or could not forget that he had been a powerful Conservative official in the Thirty-Year Regime. In 1882, at the age of fifty-nine, Milla had led a vigorous, tiring, and, at times, discouraging existence.

After finishing the installments of the Story of a foundling, he wrote no further articles for the Diario, nor did his name appear in the columns of that newspaper. In a sense, the feeling was that Milla's day had passed in Guatemala, and Salomé Jil had not been able to make the transition at his advanced stage of life. Certainly, his literary works gave every indication that he had tried.

Just before Milla began to write his final novel in the Diario, he had finished the second volume of the History, carrying the story down to the year 1686. The government ordered the second volume to be printed in the same printing establishment that had printed the opening volume, the second one to be published in the number of 5,000 copies at the expense of the national treasury. The presidential resolution ordering that printing carried the date of March 21, 1882.<sup>42</sup> By the last part of the month of September, José Milla was engaged in proofreading the printed galleys of the History.

In that second volume, José Milla continued his step-by-step account of the end of the conquest and the transition into the period of

the colonization of the Captaincy-General. He continued to follow a scholarly exposition of the materials he encountered in the documents he had outlined in the prologue to the first edition. Milla had long been aware of the drama and the interest of the colonial period, and his narrative carried his enthusiasm over to his readers. In the History he carefully used conflicting accounts in a way that best presented each development in the history that he wrote. Footnotes explained any particular divergence which arose. All in all, his careful management of the sources combined with his keen ability to describe the local scene and human character in a simple, but correct, narrative style made for a history which stood the test of time after its completion and is still a basic work today.<sup>43</sup>

#### The Death of José Milla, 1882

At the time that he was occupied in proofreading the second volume, Milla was taken painfully ill with heart trouble.<sup>44</sup> In addition, he was outrageously insulted, and, being neither a thick-skinned man nor a calculating and shameless person himself in human relations, friends of his saw in that insulting attack the final blow to his ailing system.<sup>45</sup> On the night of Saturday, September 30, with his family gathered at the bedside, José Milla, the beloved Salomé Jil of Guatemalan literature, passed away in his home in Guatemala City at sixty years of age.<sup>46</sup> Sunday was a day of mourning for the capital city. On Monday, when the daily edition of the Diario de Centro-América appeared,<sup>47</sup> it displayed columns bordered in black, declaring Central American letters to be in mourning. The humorous portraitist of Guatemalan customs, the famed Central American

historian, the renowned novelist, and the ever-popular José Milla was dead.



# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Historia de un Pepe, Don Bonifacio, 4th ed., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>J. Fred Rippy, "Relations of the United States and Guatemala during the epoch of Justo Rufino Barrios," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XXII (November, 1942), 595-605.

<sup>3</sup>García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, Corona fúnebre, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Un viaje al otro mundo, 3d ed., I, 2.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., III, 423-424.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 425-426.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 513.

<sup>9</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 86.

<sup>10</sup>Víctor Miguel Díaz, Apuntes y reseñas (Guatemala, 1924), p. 59.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>José Milla, "Don Juan Matheu socio benemérito, noticia biográfica," La Sociedad Económica, IV (September 30, 1875), 1-2.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>John L. Martin, "The literary works of José Milla," University of Pittsburgh Bulletin, XXXVII (January 15, 1941), p. 213.

<sup>15</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 439-440.

<sup>16</sup>El Guatemalteco, November 17, 1876, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup>Alejandro Marure, Bosquejo histórico de las revoluciones de Centro-América, desde 1811 hasta 1834, prol. Lorenzo Montúfar (2d ed.; Guatemala, 1877-1878), "Prólogo." This is an excellent, brief summary of the general state of nineteenth-century historiography in Guatemala.

<sup>18</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 110.

<sup>19</sup>See Chapter V, footnote 4.

<sup>20</sup>C. H. Berendt, "Collections of historical documents in Guatemala," Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, 1876 (Washington,

1877), pp. 421-423. This report by [Karl Hermann] Berendt was an indignant protest against the continual dissipation of documents and the ignorance of historical materials in Guatemala. It is a full report of the current conditions of archives and libraries in 1876, when Milla was commissioned as historian.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. See also Juan Cavarrete, "Catálogo razonado de los objetos con que se inauguró el Departamento Etnográfico del Museo Nacional," La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (May, 1866), 61-74; "Catálogo de las obras impresas y manuscritos de que actualmente se compone la Biblioteca de la Sección Etnográfica del Museo Nacional," La Sociedad Económica, III (February, 1875), 3-5.

<sup>22</sup>Berendt, "Collections of historical documents in Guatemala," p. 421.

<sup>23</sup>Antonio Batres Jáuregui, La América Central ante la historia (Guatemala, 1915-1949), I, 37.

<sup>24</sup>El Guatemalteco, January 22, 1880, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup>José Milla, Historia de la América Central, I, "Prologo."

<sup>26</sup>s/[alvador] Falla, "Un libro importante," La Sociedad Económica, VI (February 15, 1880), 3.

<sup>27</sup>La Sociedad Económica, VI (April 30, 1880), 3.

<sup>28</sup>Diario de Centro-América, August 12, 1880, p. 1; García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, Corona fúnebre, pp. 23-24.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1880, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., December 3, 1880, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Martin E. Erickson, "Trends in Central-American literature," Intellectual trends in Latin America (Austin, 1945), p. 112.

<sup>32</sup>Diaz, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>33</sup>See the excellent photo in the fourth edition of Un viaje al otro mundo (1936).

<sup>34</sup>José Milla, "Lacandonia. Expedición al Lacandon y al Itza. Episodios históricos de 1555 á 1697," Diario de Centro-América, October 26, 1880, p. 1; November 2, 1880, p. 1; November 9, 1880, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup>José Milla, "MINAS. Noticias históricas y anecdóticas sobre su explotación en el país," Diario de Centro-América, January 5, 1881, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup>Diario de Centro-América, May 17, 1881, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1881, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1880, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., February 26, 1881, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup>Javier Valenzuela, Don José Milla y Vidaurre como escritor de costumbres (Guatemala, 1890). The only copy of this work available to the author of this study was a typescript in the Society of Geography and History, of which the present quotation formed part of pages 12-13.

<sup>41</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 443.

<sup>42</sup>El Guatemalteco, March 31, 1882, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup>John L. Martin, "A note on José Milla, official historian of Guatemala," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XXI (November, 1941), 673-676.

<sup>44</sup>Diaz, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>45</sup>Rosa, "José Milla y Vidaurre," Revista de la Universidad [de Honduras], p. 188.

<sup>46</sup>Current accounts of Milla's death, like much of the information on his life, disagreed as to the time of his passing away. Many close friends, and the Diario de Centro-América of October 2, 1882, gave the time as 12:15 a.m. of the morning of October 1, 1882. It seems quite probable that José Milla did die on October 1, but the traditional date of September 30 has been adhered to here in lieu of positive evidence to the contrary.

<sup>47</sup>"José Milla," Diario de Centro-América, October 2, 1882, p. 1.

## CHAPTER VIII

### AN APPRECIATION OF JOSE MILLA

#### Milla and Posterity

Although he certainly has had severe critics, José Milla has enjoyed an excellent reputation in all but his political activities since the time of his death. His various literary works and his History have gone through many new editions, the Quadros de Costumbres having appeared in their fifth edition in 1952. Writers in Europe and America have continued to cite his works in their investigations in the fields of anthropology, history, and literature. At this point, a brief appraisal of the man, his works, and his continuing influence in Central America can be attempted.

The works of Milla have withstood the test of time in Guatemala, for they continue to delight succeeding generations of young people who read and enjoy the stories, novels, and History in the classroom. Many a copy of one of his works carries a dedication to a student who received the work as a prize for outstanding study in a course on Central American literature or geography and history, and his writings are read in the schools and in the university where the History, for example, remains required reading. At the same time, many of his lesser known writings, happened to remain outside the collected works of Milla, still lie unused in newspapers in the public and private collections of Guatemala.

No biographical study of any real breadth or penetration has been

made prior to this dissertation, although the Honduran Ramón Rosa repeatedly promised one during the decade following Milla's death.<sup>1</sup> In 1888, Rosa was actually authorized by the Guatemalan Academy--correspondent of the Spanish Academy--to write a biographical and critical study of Milla,<sup>2</sup> but, in the following year, he explained that family illness had prevented his publishing it.<sup>3</sup> If such a study was completed in manuscript form, and a rumor persists that it was, such a work has not come to the attention of the public. However, the many short biographical articles that Rosa left on José Milla adequately attested to his ability to have made such an appraisal, had he lived to do so.

Subsequent to his death in 1882, reflections on Milla's life and works have appeared in essays forming component parts of books, in scattered articles in reviews and newspapers, and in short speeches eulogizing the man. He has periodically been brought forward for lavish and impassioned attention, only to be replaced in his niche without any beneficial or sincere attention having been shown him in the process. Even for those reflections of opinion which have been stimulating in certain paragraphs, annoying errors and misrepresentations in other paragraphs have detracted from their excellence.

In the absence of careful study of the leading national political and literary personalities and their times, there has grown up in Guatemala a tendency to foster a mythology of men like Milla,<sup>4</sup> and that has been tantamount to stifling their true significance by damning them with great praise. What has really been needed was to dignify them in a simple and accurate account of their accomplishments and defects, to



reduce the fiction to fact. In the case of José Milla, he was no Walter Scott, no Figaro, no Émile Zola, and no Tacitus. It has been fruitless to propagate such thinking, and, in Milla's case, the inattention to his life and works has scarcely been worthy of the man! The varied facets of his long career in politics, literature, history, and society have already been highlighted in the several chapters of this study, and now it remains only to characterize them in a brief summary of each.

#### Public Servant

José Milla y Vidaurre lived in a period of Central American history when republican government, as the successor to colonial control, was struggling to emerge, and Guatemala lacked a national process for government and society. Conservative aristocrats and the clergy sought "stable" government under a colonial-like status quo as a solution to most of the problems of the republican period. The more liberal creoles of the small elite class of society and economy looked for a solution in the "progressive" ideas of political thought emanating from Europe and the United States. Both groups were favorable to the technological advances made in the United States in the middle years of the nineteenth century.

While the conservative elements, through the invincible military might of the caudillo Rafael Carrera, held power and avoided reform in colonial institutions from 1839 until 1871, the more progressive thinkers of the liberal factions destroyed themselves through schism and party bickering over the ways and means to achieve a new order of national life. They sought after the eternal illusion that beautiful political theory in itself would ensure the perfect order of governmental functioning--the

way of the Conservative Party was more practical and did, in fact, represent the stability that has marked most of the years of government since 1821. Periods of eight to twelve years of reform government have been followed by periods of fourteen to thirty-two years of dictatorial control in Guatemala.<sup>5</sup>

In the end, the Liberals resorted to Carrera's way and seized power from the Cerna party by force of arms in 1871. The result of the combined efforts of Liberals and Conservatives during the fifty years of independence after 1821 was that there existed no governmental process worthy of the name republican. The stamp of backward area and underdeveloped economy was already firmly affixed to Guatemala.

Milla was born in and lived through sixty years of that initial period of national life, subject to the prevailing forces of colonialism and attempted reforms. He chose the Conservative Party as his vehicle in the political field, looking to it for stable government to counter the chaos of twenty years of civil chaos through Isthmian wars--some 143 separate battles from 1822-1842.<sup>6</sup> It was no novelty that he shrank from such chaos, even though he had proclaimed great enthusiasm for French romanticism as a schoolboy during a decade when the civil wars were all about him. William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the innovators of English romanticism, themselves shrank from the excesses of the French Revolution and were then regarded by their own counterparts of Lorenzo Montúfar as men who had forsaken their ideals.<sup>7</sup>

His country has still to solve its eternal impasse of which political camp is to rule, reform or reaction. Milla sidestepped the fate

of the nineteenth-century romantic who did not write because of political exile, or who died young of poverty or fever--or both. His "liberal" enthusiasm in school served to lead him to a flare for literary expression. His decision to enter adult life with the Conservative Party afforded him a baptism of fire in the political arena and assured him a place with conservatism by 1849. From that year until 1855, he solidified his personal philosophy in a form concrete enough to be laid before the public in the editorials of the Gazette. By 1861, when he began to produce abundantly in literature, José Milla was a very mature person.

Combining his native literary talent with a lifelong curiosity and energy, his governmental posts in journalism furnished the means for the expression of his literature. Central America has had a traditional paucity of books; the newspaper--news organ, book, magazine, and review, all in one--has been the answer to prohibitive costs for printing books and for the lack of a reading public.<sup>8</sup> For editor and author Milla, the newspaper meant a livelihood, an incentive to master and form his ideas, an outlet for those ideas--both in editorials and literary pieces--, a position of prominence in which to meet distinguished travelers, a stimulation to grow and develop personally by those excellent contacts, and, finally, a constant source of information, ideas, techniques, and a handy guide to see his own society from the broader viewpoint of comparison with the rest of the world. The foreign newspapers that he read in his editorial capacity educated him to trends that helped him to accomplish what he did at home.

Writers who condemn Milla's politics and praise his literary

offerings are anachronistic and otherwise illogical for his politics and literature were of one and the same origin--his conservative political life. Lest the often-implied stigma of political corruption continue to leave an annoying doubt in many minds, Milla was noted for the "decorous poverty" in which he lived. His private letters referred to his modest economic status on numerous occasions through the years. A vitriolic newspaper denunciation of the Carrera regime appeared in a New York newspaper in 1864, and was reproduced in Guatemala in 1872, after the ousting of the Conservatives the previous year. Its content typified the accusation of political graft, as follows:

The friends of General Carrera know the prostitutes' creed by memory: they say that when I go off to hell I want to make the trip on a grayish billy goat. That is a charade, a guessing game of words, that means they will sell their persons for plenty of silver; naturally, the circle of patriots that surrounds the President contains many who are as pure white as pigeons, and the slightly golden trappings of his ministers are going to astonish Pluto when those gentlemen turn up at the gates of Avernus. We exclude Mr. Cerezo because he does not share in the carving up with the big knife; but he does tolerate it all and passes on whatever is desired, signing everything Big Joe Milla puts before him on his desk.<sup>9</sup>

Over the years as counsellor of state, Milla was consigned to the infernal regions of the classical Lake Avernus more than once, but, nonetheless, many truly liberal Liberals made a point of praising Milla for his poverty in office for the bard did die poor.

He had long held the Republic of Colombia in high regard, and toward the day of his death he wrote a friend in Bogotá the following lines which reflected poverty, disillusionment, and despair:

Believe me, my friend, if I were more expeditious, I would go visit that country of yours with pleasure, and I would even try if I could to be in that learned and distinguished society something more of a prophet than I have been in my land. But, without resources and with a large family, where is one to go. . . ?<sup>10</sup>

His Colombian friends encouraged a sale of his works in that South American country, in order to forward the proceeds to his widow to help her financial situation.<sup>11</sup> Continuing poverty commensurate with his government salary has been one of the very few credible reasons a Latin American--or any other--political figure could offer to support a claim of integrity in public office.

#### Romantic Portrayer of Guatemala

Romanticism in Latin America emerged out of French romanticism after about 1830, and it was in that decade and in the early 1840's that Milla joined with his small literary circle in Francophile tertulias where they praised Victor Hugo, Sué, and Lamartine. The Guatemalans, like good romantics, hoped for an autochthonous literature based on native historical and geographical themes. Just as the politicians sought a national governmental process, the writers hoped for a national literature. They chose as their principal genres the novel, poetry, and history, and they also penned essays and sketches of customs, the forerunner of the short story.<sup>12</sup> Drama was not important in Guatemala, nor has it been noticeably cultivated since that time.<sup>13</sup>

When José Milla wrote the prologue for José Batres y Montúfar's poetry in 1844, he was well aware of the new romantic movement. He explained that Batres had acquired his training from the worthy models afforded by the so-called classics of the great masters, but that Batres knew of the romantic tendency to break with the classic tradition and did actually modify his last composition, "The Clock."<sup>14</sup> When, after 1861, José Milla himself began to write, he came under the classification of a



first generation romantic, by date of birth, political times, literary style, and subject matter.<sup>15</sup> His writing, like Batres', began with the imitation of worthy models: Batres' Poems, Larra's sketches, Byron's poetry, Scott's novels, and even Manuel F. Pavón's newspaper format in the Gazette.

The opportunity to publish merged with his native talent soon led José Milla to profit by his acquaintance with those writers and to advance from mere imitation to create a literary style in his own right as Salomé Jil. In his writing, Spain was important; his subject matter was primarily the Spanish empire in Central America, and his style and inspiration came from nineteenth-century Spaniards in large part. Rubén Darío, the eminent Nicaraguan whose Azul (1888) set the stage for modernism in Latin American letters, named Milla as one of the three greatest Central American novelists. Writing in Spain in 1899 and 1900, his evaluation of Milla was that he was ". . . the legitimate fruit of Spain."<sup>16</sup>

Chivalry and the medieval-like ruins of Antigua furnished his historical theme. The character of that colonial city and its great men, rather than the natural beauties of Guatemalan lakes, mountains, and volcanoes, provided his cast:

. . . with a firm step he marched over the ruins of the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Guatemala, unearthed the bodies buried there beneath the weighty gravestones of oblivion, breathed life into them with his powerful pen and offered them to the world dressed with the military trappings of the middle ages, filled with their religious preoccupations; but, always cavaliers, lovers of their God and their King and slaves to the love sworn in the arms of their women.<sup>17</sup>

While he excelled in the colonial theme, he also wrote of the creole customs and Central American idiosyncrasies.<sup>18</sup> His forte was character

delineation, description, and narration, but he was neither innovator nor analyst by nature. Artistically and politically, his saving grace was an irrepressible sense of humor with regard to life and human nature, and he gave the Guatemalans a durable national prototype of the common man in Juan Chapín--the one case in which his imagination led him to create a truly memorable personality.

The lifelessness of the Indian in his writings, except for the History, might have appeared a serious defect in a writer from a country predominantly Indian in population. However, the Indian uprisings in the remote areas from 1847 until 1856 were one of the first distasteful topics upon which he had to editorialize in the official Gazette. Such activity was a grave challenge to the stability of the government. He reported on their crimes: drunkenness, wanton maimings and murder, burning, raiding and destroying of outlying farm properties, and other similarly "uncivilized" excesses of the "mountaineers" and the "Indians." Milla's reaction was that of other American writers who generally wrote of the Indian that they personally knew: the military man and the settler who contended with the Indian over land and property saw him as having the qualities of a demon.<sup>19</sup> Milla relegated the Indian to an inert, minor role in the history of colonial times in his literature, or left him out of his work entirely. Except for the History, he never dignified the uncivilized native.

Milla's own country still faces the enigma of the Indian masses who form the bulk of the population but live apart from the national stream of life. Milla merely reflected the same inadequacy in treating the Indian

question that has characterized his land. The literary Generation of 1920 in Guatemala later revived an interest in the indigenous theme in literature, and it has continued in a desultory way to form part of national writing.<sup>20</sup> Until 1945, anthropological scholarship had not really thrived in Guatemala either, but the establishment of a National Indian Institute and the work of foreign anthropologists has brought a recent survival of Indian interest.<sup>21</sup>

Guatemala, a reserved and conservative country in the extreme, has historically produced the best literature of Central America.<sup>22</sup> In the three principal literary forms of the history, novel, and short tale, José Milla ranks with the best talent of the Isthmian area. He has never seriously been compared with the better literary and historical writers of Latin America by any universal critic of responsible stature. Most students of José Milla in the literary field would probably be able to find agreement in an appraisal placing him near the top of the list of Central American writers in the modern period of history since independence, and they would also agree that he provided the only productive and pleasing contribution to the development of the novel, sketches of national customs, and history for the long period from 1845 until 1882.

#### The Formation of a Nineteenth-Century Historian

Latin America won out in her wars for independence from Spain at the opening of the nineteenth century, only to fall into debilitating regional wars of province against province in the throes of modern political life. The various new nations lacked an expression of their past history during the turbulent post-independence years down to mid-century.

By about 1860, greater political maturity had developed out of the clash of conservative and liberal, city and countryside, liberty and despotism. With the realization of greater political stability and an awakening sense of nationalism after that time, historical scholarship was freed to create the first regional histories. Particular emphasis was laid on the explanation of the movements for independence and other aspects of national origins.<sup>23</sup> Great literary historians produced multi-volume works like those of the Chileans, Diego Barros Arana and José Toribio Medina.

In Central America, no general historical work of importance was written from 1821 until 1871. The early state histories published on the colonial era by García Falcón (1851-1852) and by Marure (1837) on the wars for independence and the early national period conformed to the general rule for Latin America. The same general limitations that hampered the publishing of novels applied to the printing of works on history. In the periodical writings that resulted in newspapers sources, the polemical approach was the mode of expression. Accusation and defense of political maneuvers typified the information recorded, and partisan enthusiasm colored that type of history.<sup>24</sup>

José Milla's appeal in the Gazette for the writing of local chronicles in the period from 1849 until 1856 was reflective of a growing maturity and stability in the Thirty-Year Regime he served, although he was really speaking from a literary interest at that time rather than any conscious sense of historical motivation. He continued to urge the newspaper readers to take more interest in their forgotten past, but the inertia with regard to the writing of history in his country was great.

Years passed with no one to take up the task of composing a national history, and, finally, Salomé Jil began to publish his historical articles and novels--dutifully noting down his sources from the writings of the colonial chroniclers of the Kingdom of Guatemala.

By 1876, no history of the colonial past worthy of the name had appeared, so José Milla accepted the proffered commission as official historian of Guatemala, encharged by the Liberal government to give Guatemala a national history. The financial support of the government for the writing and publishing of the History was essential to its being accomplished, which was recognised in the language of the official resolution naming Milla as historian. Along with his final literary phase, Milla succeeded in writing a good history in two volumes down to 1686; it was a pity that he did not live to finish the task, for actually that was not in itself a sufficiently broad study to fix Milla as anything but a "local" historian of Central America. His two-volume study was dwarfed by comparison with the multi-volume works produced in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico.

Along with other literary-minded historians, Milla wrote interesting history because he saw in it the art of adventure to be evoked from the colonial past. Being a romantic writer, history for him was drama, intrigue, conflict, and the sport of great men. As a historian, just as in literature, he became the voice of the colonial past in Central America. No other man writing in Central America in the national period has superseded his two-volume work on general colonial history, and it is a better written history than that of the longer seven-volume tirade by



Lorenzo Montúfar on the nineteenth century historical scene ordered by the same Liberal regime that employed Milla.

No sterile academician, José Milla felt that the dust should be blown from the colonial manuscripts--for much of the historical material was still in manuscript form in his day--and that the dryas dust should be swept from the chroniclers' products. He wanted past history to be presented to the reading public in good literary style, and that he accomplished. Ironically enough, in looking back, by using the chroniclers as he did, Milla gave voice to the snide criticism Montúfar had made of him when he first went to work writing up Minister Pavón's ideas in literary form--for he literally took the thinking of the chronicles and prettied it up. In writing of great men and high adventure, Milla was completely in character for he himself followed a great caudillo and probably saw history as unfolding in part under the whim and moods of great men.

Milla, as a historian, influenced others in Central America to carry on the task of creating national histories and otherwise highlighting the historical process of the Isthmian area. Dr. Marco Aurelio Soto, his student in the 1860's, became president of Honduras in 1876. Soto made another Milla student, Ramón Rosa, his assistant. Both men were devoted to Milla as a teacher. In June, 1882, President Soto wrote Milla that he had read in his History that Columbus had "set foot" on Honduran soil on his fourth voyage in 1502. Soto was on the point of naming a Caribbean coastal department Trujillo after the principal town located there, when he began to read the "... magnificent History of Central America [which] suggested the idea of baptizing the new Department with

the name Columbus, as a testimony of gratitude to the memory of this great man and to fix the interesting historical memory of the place where the immortal discoverer of the New World put his feet for the first time on the American continent."<sup>25</sup> Although Soto later and at some length refuted that fact, for Columbus did not actually land in Honduras, that department of Honduras today carries the name of Colón, or Columbus.

The naming of Milla to the post of Guatemalan state historian marked the beginning in time of a continuing professional school of Central American historiography.<sup>26</sup> In Guatemala, the young man he had befriended in the Foreign Ministry—Agustín Gómez Carrillo—was commissioned by the José María Reina Barrios government to complete Milla's History. He did so in three volumes, published in 1895, 1897, and 1905.<sup>27</sup> The example set by the Guatemalan government was followed by other Central American governments.

In 1878, Dr. Soto named historian Antonio R. Vallejo to write a history of his government of Honduras, and the Compendio de la historia social y política de Honduras (Compendium of the social and political history of Honduras) appeared in two volumes in Tegucigalpa in 1882 and 1883.<sup>28</sup> In 1880, Dr. Soto also named Vallejo to organize the National Archive founded that same year.<sup>29</sup> León Fernández in Costa Rica, a politician and historian, began a ten-volume Colección de documentos para la historia de Costa-Rica (Collection of documents for the history of Costa-Rica) in 1881, and publication was terminated in 1907. He also wrote a Historia de Costa Rica durante la dominación española, 1502-1821 (History of Costa Rica during the Spanish domination, 1502-1821), printed in Madrid

in 1889.

In Nicaragua, the government of President Joaquín Zavala commissioned Tomás Ayón as historian, for Zavala ". . . wanted in that manner to lay the foundation for a national history."<sup>30</sup> Ayón wrote two volumes on the Historia de Nicaragua desde los tiempos más remotos hasta el año de 1852 (History of Nicaragua from the most remote time until the year 1852), which appeared in Granada from 1882 until 1887. In his prologue, Ayón reserved his highest praise for ". . . the very important volume that is published under the title of History of Central America by don José Milla."<sup>31</sup> Another pioneer of the nineteenth-century historians in Nicaragua was José Dolores Gámez. He traveled to Guatemala in 1881 to collect material for his history.<sup>32</sup> At that time, Milla had already published his first volume and was at work on his second. No specific mention of Milla was made by Gámez in his work, but Milla's History was listed in the bibliography. Gámez' Historia de Nicaragua desde los tiempos prehistóricos hasta 1860, en sus relaciones con España, México y Centro-América (History of Nicaragua from prehistoric times until 1860, in its relations with Spain, Mexico and Central America) was published in Managua in 1889.

Created during a period of rising recognition of nationalism in Central America, the History of Central America by José Milla, as well as the other histories, remained as basic works in their respective countries from the last two decades of the nineteenth century until the present time. In such competent historical studies as that by Dr. Paul Burgess on Justo Rufino Barrios (2d ed.; Quezaltenango, 1946), Milla's

History still heads the list of "recognized works."<sup>33</sup> Dr. Adrián Recinos, writing a biography of the conqueror Pedro de Alvarado in 1952, praised the serenity and impartiality of the judgment of José Milla. He then went on to cite from Milla's History the "ambitious and knightly character" of the conqueror of Guatemala,<sup>34</sup> for José Milla remains the acknowledged voice of the colonial period of Central America.

#### The Man and His Works

Central American literature and history have been generally passed over by European and American readers and scholars, with the result that many outstanding Isthmian personalities throughout the past four hundred years are little known, if indeed they are known at all. The pioneer English publisher, Mark J. Kelly, founder of the daily newspaper the Diario de Centro América in Guatemala City, wrote of Milla in 1897 that if he had been born an Englishman and written in English his fame would have been universal.<sup>35</sup> While that smacked of more of the same great praise that was heaped on Milla after his death, there was still an element of truth in the observation.

If more Guatemalans in the past had been as determined to observe, study, describe, and discuss their land and society as was José Milla--so determined to enlist more of his countrymen to enjoy their country and view it in broader terms--one wonders what the sum of such activity might have created in that country by this time. As Guatemala continues through time to attain a more dispassionate and mature outlook on her historical past, value judgments of past political history and of the outstanding men who by their actions made that history will mellow to a

more bipartisan national pride in the past. José Milla, as a moderate and consistently productive patriot, who himself shared grandly in nineteenth-century history, will merit the continued affection of an appreciative posterity which should genuinely dignify him because it knows and understands his historical role in Guatemala.

Having lived the abundant life, the legacy Salomé Jil left his countrymen was full and rich: a book-length legend-poem, five historical novels, four volumes of sketches of Guatemalan customs, three travel volumes, a great number of miscellaneous articles, editorials, biographical sketches, and poems, and two volumes of Central American history. In his day, he contributed to the development of the historical novel and the sketches of customs in Central America, and he brought them into a vogue that was sustained in following years. He successfully sought through long years to stimulate his readers to an appreciation of Central American history, and he finally penned a history which was cut short by his death.

For posterity, the writings of Salomé Jil have remained thoroughly enjoyable in style, language, and theme. By a diffusion of ideas, his History of Central America stimulated similar projects in neighboring republics. His stature in Guatemala and in Central America was and is great, but outside the Isthmus his writings must be considered to assume a value relative to the size and importance of that area of Latin America to which he dedicated his services. José Milla was a talented, productive, and patriotically-dedicated man, and a thoroughly admirable Central American personality of the nineteenth century.



# FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Rosa, "Don José Milla y Vidasurre," p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>Academia guatemalteca, Biografías de literatos nacionales (Guatemala, 1889), I, iii, xi.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 151-152.

<sup>4</sup>Brañas, Tras las huellas de Juan Diéguez, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>García Granados, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>6</sup>Marure, Efemérides (1895), p. 154.

<sup>7</sup>J. Mulgan and D. M. Davin, An introduction to English literature (Oxford, 1947), p. 94.

<sup>8</sup>Martin E. Erickson, "Trends in Central-American literature," Intellectual trends in Latin America (Austin, 1945), p. 112.

<sup>9</sup>"El gobierno del general Carrera," El Cerrúsculo, July 20, July 27, and July 31, 1872.

<sup>10</sup>La Revista [órgano de la Academia guatemalteca], II, Número 5 (1889), 71.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 71-72.

<sup>12</sup>Anderson Imbert, op. cit., pp. 115-117; Erickson, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>13</sup>Carlos Alberto Meneses Martínez, "Teatro en Guatemala," Ballet, II (July, 1954), pp. xvi, 20.

<sup>14</sup>Salomé Jil (José Milla), Libro sin nombre, 4th ed. (1935), pp. 296-297. The prologue by Milla to the first edition of Batres' poetry is reproduced here.

<sup>15</sup>Anderson Imbert, op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>16</sup>Rubén Darío, España contemporánea (Madrid, n.d.), pp. 291-292.

<sup>17</sup>García Salas, Uriarte, and González Campo, Corona fúnebre, p. 9.

<sup>18</sup>Rosa, Oro de Honduras, I, 230-231.

<sup>19</sup>Albert Keiser, The Indian in American literature (New York, 1933), p. 294.

<sup>20</sup>Ericksen, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>21</sup>Harold E. Davis, Social science trends in Latin America (Washington, D. C., 1950), p. 88.

<sup>22</sup>Ericksen, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>23</sup>Davis, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>24</sup>Lázaro Lamadrid, "A survey of the historiography of Guatemala since 1821," The Americas, VIII (October, 1951), 191.

<sup>25</sup>[Marco Aurelio Soto], ¿Desembarcó Cristóbal Colón en tierra firme del continente americano? (Tegucigalpa, 1882), pp. 7-8.

<sup>26</sup>Lamadrid, op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>27</sup>Vela, op. cit., II, 97-98.

<sup>28</sup>Rafael Heliodoro Valle, "Bibliografía historiográfica de Honduras," Revista Interamericana de Bibliografía, II (January-August, 1952), 9.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>30</sup>Tomás Ayón, Historia de Nicaragua... (Granada, 1882-1887), I, "Prólogo"; Carlos Molina Arguello, "Bibliografía historiográfica de Nicaragua," Revista Interamericana de Bibliografía, IV (January-June, 1954), 13.

<sup>31</sup>Ayón, "Prólogo."

<sup>32</sup>José D. Gómez, Historia de Nicaragua... (Managua, 1889), pp. 5-6.

<sup>33</sup>Burgess, Barrios, 2d ed. (1946), p. xx.

<sup>34</sup>Adrián Recinos, Pedro de Alvarado. Conquistador de México y Guatemala (Mexico, 1952), pp. 210-211.

<sup>35</sup>Salvador Falla, "El 'Viaje al otro mundo...'," Guatemala Literaria, I (July 1, 1903), p. 313.

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The following bibliographical items have been arranged alphabetically into two divisions. The section on "General Sources" lists useful books and includes important, short critical and expository works like articles, chapters, essays, and monographs on José Milla and his writing. No book-length bibliography or biography, especially the latter, exists for Milla. Under the second part, on "The Writings of José Milla," his writings in periodicals and newspapers, uncollected and collected, are shown together with the various editions of his works in chronological order. Entries which are believed to be uncollected are indicated by an asterisk (\*).

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1844

• Poem. "J. D. M."

"Himno Patriótico, en loor del Excmo. Teniente general, R. Carrera Jefe del ejército, etc. con motivo de la expedición salvadoreña," Montúfar, Reseña histórica de Centro-América, IV, 484-486.

1845

Compiler.

Poesías de José Batres y Montúfar. Guatemala, 1845

1846

• Speech.

"Exequias de D. Francisco Cabrera," La Revista, I, 1 (December 3, 1846), pp. 2-3.

1850

## \*Report.

Sociedad Económica de Guatemala. Memoria que presentó a la Sociedad económica en la junta general celebrada el 19 de mayo de 1850, su secretario D. José Milla.... Guatemala, 1850.

1854

## Poem.

"A Mi Amigo el Señor Licenciado Don J. D.," Uriarte, Galería poética centro-americana, II (1888), 36-39.

1855

## \*Biography.

Noticia Biográfica del Señor D. Manuel Francisco Pavon, Consejero de Estado y Ministro de lo Interior del Gobierno de la República de Guatemala. Artículos tomados de la Gaceta de Guatemala; números 58 á 62, del Tomo VII. Guatemala, 1855.

1859-1863

## \*Correspondence.

"Letters to Luis Molina," containing fifty-three unpublished letters exchanged by José Milla and Molina, beginning on February 7, 1859, and ending on December 21, 1863.

1861

## Poem.

"A Mi Hijo en su primer cumpleaños," El Noticioso, I (October 1, 1861), p. 2.

Sketches of customs (First Series). Salomé Jil. La Hoja de Avisos,

December 25 (No. 3) "Quien soy yo y por qué me doy á escribir de costumbres."

31 (No. 4) \* "Contestación de Salomé Jil á una carta de un amigo suyo de Sonsonate."

1862

January 9 (No. 5) "Nunca mas nacimiento."

15 (No. 6) "Los monopolistas."

22 (No. 7) "Un baile de guante."

30 (No. 8) "El chapín."

February	7 (No. 9)	"El guanaco."
	13 (No. 10)	"Mi casa de altos."
	18 (No. 11)	"Las semejanzas."
	22 (No. 12)	"La temporada."
March	8 (No. 14)	"El martes de carnaval en la Plaza de Toros. Artículo que no hará reír á nadie."
	19 (No. 16)	"Saber vivir."
	30 (No. 18)	"El petardista."
April	9 (No. 20)	"El distraído."
		"Mis huéspedes."
May	31 (No. 29)	"El paraguas."
June	5 (No. 30)	"Un duelo."
	16 (No. 32)	"Un amigo."
August	29 (No. 40)	"La feria de Jocotenango."

Narrative poem.

Don Bonifacio. Leyenda antigua. Guatemala, 1862.

### 1865

Poems, Articles, Sketches, Novels. Salomé Jil. La Semana.

\* Poem.

January	1 (No. 1)	"El año viejo y el año nuevo. Romance."
Sketches of customs (Second series).		
January	8 (No. 2)	"Un hombre feliz."
	15 (No. 3)	"Amores crónicos."
	22 (No. 4)	"El telégrafo."
	29 (No. 5)	"Las medias naranjas."
February	5 (No. 6)	"Un niño mimado."
	19 (No. 8)	"Una tertulia."
	26 (No. 9)	"Los animales domesticos."
March	5 (No. 10)	"Descientos diez minutos de locura."
	19 (No. 12)	"Un pobre hombre."

Article.

April	9 (No. 15)	"La conjuración de los Contreras. Episodio de la historia del antiguo reino de Guatemala en el Siglo XVI. <u>[Part I].</u> "
	16 (No. 16)	"_____. <u>Ibid.</u> <u>[Part II].</u> "

\* Poem.

April	23 (No. 17)	"Al Gral. Carrera." <u>[by]</u> "J. M."
Article.		
May	14 (No. 20)	"La destruccion de la primitiva ciudad de Guatemala. Episodio histórico del siglo XVI."

Sketches of customs.

June	25 (No. 25)	"Un día de cumpleaños."
July	2 (No. 26)	"Un litigante."
	9 (No. 27)	"Historia de una guerra de treinta años."

Salomé Jil. Cuadros de Costumbres Guatemaltecas. Vol. I. Guatemala, 1865.

- Article.  
 July 16 (No. 28) "Rebelion de Cristoval de Olid. Episodio histórico del reino de Guatemala en el siglo XVI."
- Sketch of customs.  
 July 23 (No. 29) "Padre Mercader, hijo caballero y nieto pordiosero."
- Articles.  
 July 30 (No. 30) "Cosas de otro tiempo. Anécdotas extractadas de las crónicas y documentos antiguos de Guatemala. 1ª Mallen de Rueda. 2ª El cordonazo de San Francisco."  
 August 27 (No. 34) "El puente de los esclavos."  
 September 10 (No. 36) "Cosas de otro tiempo. Anécdotas extractadas de las crónicas y documentos antiguos de Guatemala. 3ª La iglesia del cerro del Carmen."  
 18 (No. 37) "El escritorio."
- Sketches of customs.  
 October 22 (No. 42) "El cucuxque."  
 29 (No. 43) "El telégrafo. 2ª Parte."  
 November 5 (No. 44) "Visita al cementerio."  
 12 (No. 45) "El lana."  
 19 (No. 46) "Un hombre de desempeño."  
 26 (No. 47) "Un enfermo."  
 December 18 (No. 50) "Las mudanzas de casa."  
 24 (No. 51) "El embrollon."  
 31 (No. 52) "Por inocentes!"
- \* Poem.  
 December 31 (No. 52) "Proceso del año 1865. Romanceo."

## 1866

Sketches of customs, novel, poems. Salomé Jil. La Semana.

- January 21 (No. 55) "El sajorin."  
 28 (No. 56) "La capa."  
 February 4 (No. 57) "El torcido."  
 18 (No. 59) "Las criadas."
- Historical Novel.  
 April 8 to June 17. "La Hija del Adelantado." In eleven installments: nos. 66 through 76.

Salomé Jil. La Hija del Adelantado. Novela Histórica. Guatemala, 1866.

## Poems.

- November 19 (No. 95) "Risa y lágrimas."  
 28 (No. 96) "Deseos cumplidos."  
 December 16 (No. 98) "La conciencia."



1867

## \* Speech.

"Discurso en elogio de Fr. Matias Cordova que leyó el socio consultor D. José Milla, en el salon principal de la Sociedad Económica el dia 13 de enero de 1867," La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, I (January, 1867), 170-180.

Historical Novel. Salomé Jil. La Semana.

May 14 to September 15. "Los Nazarenos." In nineteen installments: nos. 11 through 29.

Salomé Jil. Los Nazarenos. Novela Histórica. Guatemala, 1867.

Sketch of customs. La Semana.

March 16 (No. 5) "Puros y cigarros."

1868

Historical Novel. Salomé Jil. La Semana.

May 16 to December 30, and remaining four installments in January, 1869. "El Visitador. Novela Histórica." In thirty-six installments: nos. 53 through 88.

\* Biography. La Semana.

"Don Antonio J. de Irisarri," La Semana, II (July 18 to August 2, 1868). [Nos. 61-63.]

1869

Historical Novel.

Salomé Jil. El Visitador. Novela Histórica. Guatemala, 1869.

1870

Sketches of customs. Salomé Jil. La Semana. "Libro sin nombre."

June	27 (No. 58)	"Introito, prospecto, ó prólogo."
July	3 (No. 59)	"La Lotería."
	10 (No. 60)	"El caballo de Carlos IV. Cuestión grave." "Plaza mayor y tiendas. Cuestión gravísima."
	18 (No. 61)	"El agua." "Las moscas."
	27 (No. 62)	"Memorias de un duro." "Las flores."
August	4 (No. 63)	"El 4 de agosto." "El reloj <u>[sic]</u> ."
	7 (No. 64)	"Yo y El." "El Si y el No."
	14 (No. 65)	"Las calles." "Las cartas."
	21 (No. 66)	"El espejo." "Jocotenango en agua."
	28 (No. 67)	"Los pobres." "La lengua."

- September 7 (No. 68) "Los anteojos." "El baile."  
 25 (No. 71) "Asuntos para un capítulo."  
 "El almanaque." "La ironía."  
 October 2 (No. 72) "Poeta, médico y loco." "Las casas."  
 9 (No. 73) "El sombrero."  
 November 21 (No. 75) "Los ojos." "El entreacto."

## \* Speech.

"Discurso sobre la Poesía Lírica Española, leído en el acto público de 1870, por D. Jose Milla, catedrático de Literatura Española en la Academia del Colegio de Abogados," La Semana, III (December 18, 1870), 1-2.

## 1871

Sketches of customs. Salomé Jil. La Semana.

- January 6 (No. 80) \* "Mi fraque."  
 29 (No. 83) \* "Año viejo y año nuevo."

## 1875

## Novel.

Salomé Jil. Un viaje al otro mundo, pasando por otras partes. 1871-1874. 3 vols. Guatemala, 1875.

\_\_\_\_\_. Ibid. 2d ed. Guatemala, 1875.

## \* Biography.

"Don Juan Mathen Socio Benemérito, Noticia Biográfica," La Sociedad Económica de Guatemala, IV (September 30, 1875), 1-2.

## 1876

## Novel.

Salomé Jil. Memorias de un abogado. Guatemala, 1876.

## 1879

## History.

José Milla. Historia de la América Central.... Vol. I. Guatemala, 1879.

## 1880

## Articles.

"Lacandonia. Expedición al Lacandon y al Itza. Episodios históricos de 1555 á 1697," Diario de Centro-América, October 26, 1880, p. 1; November 2, 1880, p. 1; November 9, 1880, p.1.

"Estudio Interesante. La poblacion de Guatemala desde 1604 hasta nuestros dias," Diario de Centro-América, [Part I/ December 4, 1880, p. 1; [Part II/ December 6, 1880, p. 1.

Sketches of customs. Salomé Jil. Diario de Centro-América.

- December 7 (No. 105) "Cuadros de Costumbres. Introduccion. ¿Quien no es el público y donde no se le encuentra? Variaciones sobre una paradoja."
- 9 (No. 106) Las Aventuras de Tio Climax. "La Féria de Jocotenango. I."
- 11 (No. 108) Las Aventuras de Tio Climax. "La Feria de Jocotenango. II."
- 14 (No. 110) "El chaqueton verde."
- 29 (No. 122) "La barberia. I."

1881

Sketches of customs, an article. Diario de Centro-América.  
Salomé Jil.

Sketches of customs.

- January 3 (No. 125) "La barberia. II."
- (No. 131) "Astronomicas y meteorologicas. El siglo—El año viejo—El año nuevo—El almanaque."

Article.

"MINAS. Noticias históricas y anecdóticas sobre su explotacion en el pais," Diario de Centro-América, January 5, 1881, p. 1.

Sketches of customs: CUAD. "El Canasto del Sastre": CAN. Diario de Centro-América. Salomé Jil.

- January 25 (No. 143) "EL CANASTO DEL SASTRE. [Introduction and/ El hambre."
- February 4 (No. 152) CUAD. "Los sordos."
- 7 (No. 154) CUAD. "Los hombres graves en el baile."
- 19 (No. 165) CAN. "Las lagrimas."
- 26 (No. 171) CAN. "El espejo."
- March 3 (No. 174) CAN. "Don Dinero."
- 9 (No. 179) CAN. "Los animales históricos."
- 16 (No. 185) CUAD. "D. Anselmito Vidriera."
- 19 (No. 188) CAN. "La fortuna."
- 28 (No. 194) CAN. "El puerco. (Cuestion de actualidad)."
- April 29 (No. 195) CAN. "Eclipse total."
- 2 (No. 199) CAN. "La primera chispa."
- 11 (No. 206) CAN. "La necesidad."
- 13 (No. 208) CAN. "La cara."
- 29 (No. 219) CAN. "El olvido."

May	4 (No. 223)	CAN.	"Los egoistas."
	11 (No. 229)	CUAD.	"El condescendiente."
	21 (No. 238)	CAN.	"La vejez."
June	8 (No. 252)	CUAD.	"El libro verde."
	15 (No. 258)	CAN.	"El esclavo de D. Dinero. Novela galopante; en pocos capitulos. Prólogo. Chs. I, II, III. <u>Ibid.</u> , IV, V, VI. <u>Ibid.</u> , VII, VIII, IX, X. <u>Ibid.</u> , XI, XII, XIII. <u>Ibid.</u> , XIV, XV, XVI. <u>Ibid.</u> , XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, Conclusion.
	17 (No. 259)		
	18 (No. 260)		
	20 (No. 261)		
	21 (No. 262)		
	22 (No. 263)		
July	1 (No. 271)	CUAD.	"El indeciso."
	2 (No. 272)	CAN.	"El sorteo extraordinario."
	8 (No. 277)	CUAD.	"Los perezosos."
	25 (No. 290)	CAN.	"Los tontos."
August	2 (No. 297)	CAN.	"La noche."
	12 (No. 306)	CUAD.	"Los temperamentos. I. El sanguíneo. II. El bilioso. III. El nervioso. IV. El linfático."
September	3 (No. 324)	CUAD.	"La herencia de tío. I y II."
	15 (No. 333)	CAN.	"El cabello. I - VI."
	27 (No. 342)	CAN.	"La imitación."
October	6 (No. 350)	CAN.	"La casa."
	28 (No. 369)	CAN.	"El porvenir."
November	9 (No. 378)	CAN.	"El tiempo."
	21 (No. 388)	CAN.	"El buen sentido."
	25 (No. 392)	CAN.	"Las cuatro eses del amor."
	28 (No. 394)	CAN.	"El caballo. Ejercicios hipicos."
December		CAN.	"La palabra."
		CAN.	"El año nuevo."

1882

Novel. Salomé Jil. Diario de Centro-América.

April 12 to June 23. "Historia de un Pope. Novela de Costumbres." In twenty-three installments: nos. 505, 508, 511, 514, 517, 519, 521, 524-525, 527, 530, 532, 535, 538, 541, 544, 547, 549, 552, 555, 558, 560, Fin.

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- Salomé Jil. Quadros de Costumbres Guatemaltecas. Vol. II.  
2d ed. Guatemala, 1882.  
\_\_\_\_\_. La Hija del Adelantado. [2d ed.] Guatemala, 1882.  
\_\_\_\_\_. Los Nazarenos. 2d ed. Guatemala, 1882.

## History.

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1883

## Further edition.

- Salomé Jil (José Milla). Libro Sin Nombre. 2d ed. Guatemala, 1883.

1890

## Further edition.

- Salomé Jil (José Milla). Historia de un Pene. 2d ed. Guatemala, 1890.

1897-1899

## Collected edition.

- José Milla y Vidaurre. Obras Completas de don José Milla.  
6 vols. [Referred to as the Goubaud Edition for the publisher, E. Goubaud y Cia.] Guatemala, 1897-1899.  
I. El Visitador. II. Los Nazarenos. III. La Hija del Adelantado. IV. Historia de un Pene. V. Quadros de Costumbres. VI. Libro Sin Nombre. Artículos Varios.  
(This was the 3d ed. of each of the component works.)

1924

## Sketches of customs.

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## Novel. Further edition.

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1935-1937

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Adelantado. VI.-VII.-VIII. Un Viaje al otro Mundo.  
 IX. Historia de un Pepe. X. Cuadros de Costumbres.  
 XI.-XII. Historia de la América Central. (This was  
 the 4th ed. of each of the works except the following:  
El Canasto del Sastre, 2d ed.; La Historia de la  
América Central, 2d ed.; Un Viaje al otro Mundo,  
 3d ed.)

1951

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novelas humorísticas del Canasto del sastre. Edited  
 by Thomas Ballantine Irving. Boston, 1951.

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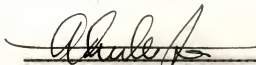
Walter Arville Payne was born in Lodi, California, on January 30, 1924, the first of four sons whose father always aided each to seek his own path. He entered the Regional Group Major on Hispanic America at the University of California (Berkeley), receiving the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1945. Enrolling in the Summer School of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala in Central America in 1948, he was granted his Master of Arts degree in Latin American History in 1951. Later, he studied history at Tulane University from 1951 to 1952, transferring in the latter year to the Inter-American Area Study Program of the University of Florida.

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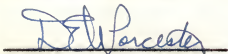
This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of the committee. It was submitted to the Director of the School of Inter-American Studies and to the Graduate Council and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

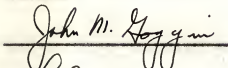
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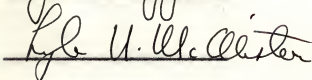
  
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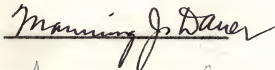
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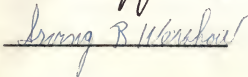
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